

Greece short of strong EU support in row with Turkey

BRUSSELS (AP) — Greece won only lukewarm support from its European Union (EU) partners Monday in a dispute with Turkey over a tiny islet in the Aegean Sea.

At their monthly meeting, EU foreign ministers backed Greek insistence that Turkey take its claims to the international Court of Justice in the Hague, Netherlands.

But they stopped short of endorsing Greece's position in its month-long standoff with Turkey, limiting themselves to calls for a peaceful solution.

"We appealed to the two to begin a dialogue and to avoid the threats of war," said Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli, who chaired the meeting.

Comments by EU ministers were a far cry from a declaration issued Feb. 8 by the EU commission, the bloc's executive body, expressing "full solidarity" with Greece.

French Foreign Minister Hervé de Charette said the commission "went a little bit beyond its competence" in its statement.

Longstanding territorial disputes in the Aegean pose thorny problems for Western governments because Turkey and Greece are NATO allies in a turbulent region.

Greece's EU partners have been angered by Greece's veto of full implementation of a customs union with Turkey that supporters argue is essential to bind Turkey closely to the West.

Athens refused again Monday to approve a 375 million European currency unit (\$486 million) aid package for Turkey that was supposed to go along with the customs union to help Turkey adjust to freer trade.

Given the high stakes of building closer ties to Ankara, Spanish Foreign Minister Carlos Westendorp said Greece's veto of the aid package was like "killing a fly with a canon."

Questions of several deputies answered today before government presents policy statement

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times
AMMAN — Before the government presents its policy statement to the Lower House of Parliament today, it will have to reply to numerous complaints filed by lawmakers.

The new government of Abdul Karim Al Kabani will have to respond to questions raised during the term of the government of Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker that ended early this month.

Answers to the questions were filed by the concerned ministers in the Sharif Zeid government but were not formally presented in the House because of time limitations.

The questions in today's session tackle mainly the performance of governors, joint Jordanian-Israeli flights staged last year and the vehicles given to directors at the Ministry of Education.

A lengthy question by Islamic Action Front (IAF) Deputy Bassam Emoush, filed last December, raised the issue of performance of governors, privileges given to them and whether former and present governors exploited their positions for personal gains and expropriated government-owned lands for personal purposes.

Dr. Emoush also asked the minister if he had a full list of all who served as governors in the past 10 years.

In a written reply submitted to the Parliament's secretary on Jan. 18, the then-minister of interior, Saleh Hamad, said he was not aware about misuse of office by governors or of registration of state lands in governors' names. However, Mr. Hamad said he would investigate the issue and would provide all the necessary information as soon as the

Ministry of Interior receives more details from the departments of licence and of land and survey.

It is not known whether Dr. Emoush would expand on the subject or whether the new minister of interior, Awad Khleifat, would give a different answer to that of his predecessor. The government has the right to explain or abstain from answering if it sees that the answer written in the House's records was sufficient.

Another question was filed last December by another IAF deputy, Abdul Aziz Jabbar, who asked what was the objective of staging joint flights of Jordanian and Israeli planes last year.

The then-prime minister, Sharif Zeid, said in his reply in January that the joint flights were staged to mark the first anniversary of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty signed in October 1994.

A third IAF deputy, Ahmad Kasasbeh, asked the former minister of education, Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh, on vehicles given to general directors at the ministry and whether there was a legal basis for such a privilege for them.

Mr. Rawabdeh explained in his reply that 12 cars were bought at a cost of JD 152,100 and given to directors at the ministry's departments in Karak, Irbid, Balqa, Mafrag and Amman. He added that the move was in line with a decision taken by the prime minister last year.

The question and answers will be read today and probably reexamined as the concerned deputy or minister finds fit.

In several sessions, new governments had different answers from their predecessors.

Major scrapes home in vote over arms-for-Iraq report

LONDON (AFP) — Conservative Prime Minister John Major's government scraped home with a majority of one in a crucial parliamentary vote Monday on a report implicating two of its ministers in illegal arms sales to Iraq.

Members of parliament backed Mr. Major 320 to 319 votes after a six-and-a-half-hour debate, thereby warding off the threat of a subsequent vote of no-confidence which the opposition Labour Party would almost certainly have called in the event of a government defeat.

Opposition hopes of a win rose in the feverish moments before the result was announced as it emerged that all nine Ulster Unionist MPs — who have come to Major's rescue before — had voted against the government.

But last minute arm-twisting by Conservative Party managers paid off as enough would-be Tory rebels were persuaded to the party line. Only two voted with the opposition.

MP Peter Thurnham, who resigned from the Tories last week, reducing Mr. Major's parliamentary majority to just two votes — also voted against the government.

Earlier, the government had announced several concessions to improve ministerial accountability and move towards more openness on arms sales in a bid to woo backbench critics.

Former Tory Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher weighed into the argument in the House of Lords, forcefully backing the government's contention that there had been no change in the guidelines on arms sales to Iraq and no attempt to mislead parliament.

After the one-vote win was announced, Mr. Major commented: "Parliament has now discussed Sir Richard Scott's report. Now it is time to get down to the detailed work of taking forward his recommendations."

The late-night vote was on the report of a three-year inquiry by Scott into British arms sales to Iraq in the late 1980s and early 1990s, in violation of an embargo in force at the time.

The object of the vote was the Scott Commission's 1,800-page report on allegations the government allowed, encouraged and assisted British companies to violate the embargo, then misled parliament about it.

Issued 13 days ago, the report was particularly critical of Chief Treasury Secretary William Waldegrave and Attorney General Nicholas Lyell.

In the days after the release of the report, Mr. Major dug his heels in, saying he would not yield to vociferous opposition demands for the two ministers' heads, even if it cost him crucial votes.

Mr. Waldegrave, said the report, deliberately misled parliament by failing to inform it that government guidelines on sales to Iraq had been altered.

Mr. Lyell was faulted for pressuring ministers to sign public interest immunity certificates, the so-called gag orders that withheld crucial government documents from the defence in a criminal trial of three businessmen charged with illegal arms sales.

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Violence rages in Algeria

PARIS (R) — Algerian security forces killed 38 guerrillas in their latest operations in the violence-hit country, bringing to 60 the number reported slain in the past week, security sources said.

The latest sweeps, in 12 of the country's 48 provinces, took place during six days up to Sunday.

A statement by the security services, carried by Algeria's official news agency APS, said six of the rebels died in the Saharan town of Laghouat on Friday. Another five were shot dead in the northeastern mountain town of Batna on Saturday.

The others, described as "criminals" — Algeria's official shorthand for guerrillas trying to overthrow the authorities — died singly or in groups of two or three.

On Sunday, Algerian security forces reported they had killed 22 rebels in the past week — apparently not included in the latest toll. Among the 22 were four cornered in Kouba, a suburb of the capital.

Weak economy "feeds extremism, fundamentalism and violence."

Nonetheless, there were mounting calls inside and outside the government for a permanent separation of Islam from the autonomous areas. This was coupled with sharp criticism of Mr. Peres for ending an 11-day closure amid well-publicised Shin Bet warnings that extremists planned more bombings.

Mr. Shahal, the police minister, said the police are "almost permanently in favour of closure" and that he would recommend the borders stay shut until Arafat cracks down on Hamas leaders.

Zeev Schiff, a leading military commentator and correspondent for the Haaretz newspaper, said the pressure of a closure would force Mr. Arafat to overcome his reluctance to act against Hamas, which has a large following in the Gaza Strip.

"The closure must exist," he wrote, "because it protects our security as long as activities like these last."

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Political confusion reigns in Iran ahead of elections

TEHRAN (AFP) — Total confusion surrounds campaigning for Iran's general elections on March 8, clouding the Islamic republic's already complex political landscape.

Amid bitter rivalries and recriminations ahead of the parliamentary poll, no political group has been allowed to present its candidates or unveil its programmes.

Despite the absence of parties with clear policies and the fact that the campaign will not officially start until Thursday, an electoral battle is already underway in the press and through leaflets and tracts handed out in the streets.

But most of the players in the campaign are either unidentified or they resort to allusions and defamations to sideline their rivals rather than political argument.

Two main forces have so far emerged from the electoral chaos, although they lack clear definition or a platform.

On the right of the political spectrum is the Association of Militant Clergy (AMC), an umbrella group comprising of conservative Shiite Muslim clerics and a large proportion of the Tehran's merchant class.

The AMC, which dominates the political establishment including the outgoing parliament, is the only group which has announced some of its candidates for the Tehran constituency.

On the opposite side to the AMC are the moderates who formed a movement last month called the "Servants of Construction" in a bid to challenge the conservatives for seats.

However, only the 16 founders of the group —

comprising of 10 ministers, four vice-presidents, the governor of the central bank and the mayor of Tehran — have been identified.

The 10 ministers were later forced to withdraw for legal reasons and under conservative pressure.

The "servants" reportedly support President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, but the president, who is a member of the AMC, has so far refrained from acknowledging their allegiance.

The differences between the two main forces are not clearly defined. In an indication of the bizarre complexities of Iran's political life, 10 out of the "servants" candidates for Tehran are also on the rival list of the AMC.

The "servants" have gone to great lengths to minimise their differences with the conservatives, who propagate the traditional political line no one dares challenge.

They back the principle of the Velayat-e-Faghih, or religious government, in Iran and demand absolute obedience to paramount leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Conservative leaders have repeatedly accused the moderates of betraying these two main principles of the country's theocratic system of government, installed after the 1979 Islamic revolution.

To head off such accusations, Vice-President Ataollah Mohajerani, who is one of the "servants", said last week that his group had no "ideological differences" with the conservative faction.

In the absence of electoral programme, slogans used by the two factions are also of no help in dispelling confusion in the minds of the voters.

Among the mottos used by

the conservatives are: "Support for the path of Imam Khomeini, in reference to the founder of the Islamic republic Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, 'obedience to the leader and support for Rafsanjani'."

The moderates, for their part, use such slogans as "under the banner of the leader," "development of the country," and "the dignity of Islam."

Their leaflets and posters are no clearer. Under portraits of Khomeini and his successor, they simply call for a massive turnout in the election.

Only the colours used are different — the "servants" using the red, white and green of the Iranian flag in their advertisements and the conservatives a solid orange.

Besides these main forces, two other factions have emerged ahead of the polls: the Association for the Defence of the Values of the Islamic Revolution, headed by hardline cleric Mohammad Mohammadi Reysabadi, and the left-wing Organisation of the Mujaheddin of the Islamic Revolution.

These two movements, along with the liberal opposition Liberation Movement of Iran (LMI), have so far played only a marginal role in the electoral battle.

The LMI, headed by former foreign minister Ebrahim Razi, had seen four of its hopefuls get the go-ahead from the interior ministry to stand for the first time in 16 years. But sources close to the group said Monday they had been rejected by the Council of Supervision, which oversees the election process.

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Communal strife tears Egyptian village apart

KAFR DUMYAN, Egypt (AFP) — Police are out in force in the Nile Delta village of Kafir Dumyan where violence between Christians and Muslims has left deep tension between the two communities.

Riot police with helmets and plastic shields block access to the centre of the village, some 150 kilometres northeast of Cairo.

Violence erupted in the village on Saturday after a rumour that the local priest planned to expand the church and build an extra room on it, according to the Interior Ministry.

It said a policeman and three civilians were injured and 41 houses burned when "several thousand residents gathered and tried to attack the church and the priest's home."

The church's short white steeple topped by a cross rises above the mud-brick houses of the village, surrounded by fields and crisscrossed by irrigation canals. Its walls are charred black in places after being attacked by the mob. Firefighters stand by in the town in case of a repeat of arson attacks that followed the rioting.

At the edge of town next door to a mosque, Lutfi Ibrahim Khalil, a 50-year-old Christian tailor, showed his home, stripped and looted during the violence.

"Muslims took everything: the five doors, the windows, the furniture, the mattresses. Everything," he said. On the floor were the shards of a

shattered toilet.

"They come from here and from neighbouring villages — young, old, women, children, at least 5,000 of them. All this because our priest wanted to expand the church," Mr. Khalil said.

He accused the Gamaa Islamiyah (Islamic Group) militant movement of being behind the riot, saying, "there have been problems for about a month. The pressure went up during the holiday marking the end of the month-long Ramadan fast."

A third of the village are Christians, two thirds Muslim, he said, showing the blue cross Egypt's Coptic Christians tattoo on their wrist.

"This is the first time such a thing has happened," he said.

Then a policeman interrupted, saying: "The incidents lasted only half an hour and everything was returned to order. The governor visited and the situation is calm."

"There was a little problem around the church. It has nothing to do with religion," the policeman said, identifying himself only as "the chief."

The "incidents" were sparked by a scuffle between a village guard and another man in front of the church, he said.

Local Muslims refused to discuss the events in "Kafir Al Afi," the name they give instead of the Christian "Kafir Al Dumyan."

'Iran, France want better relations'

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran and France have a mutual desire to improve their relations, but it will take time, French Housing and Transport Minister Bernard Pons said Monday.

Mr. Pons, the first senior French official to visit Iran in five years, was speaking after meeting Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.

He said that despite its economic and political problems, "things are happening in Iran which has large potential, and the time is right to try to develop our cooperation."

Nevertheless, he added that any normalisation would be within the three-year-old "critical dialogue" between Iran and the European Union, which is snaggled on the Islamic republic's alleged support for terrorism, human rights abuses and the 1989 fatwa (religious decree) condemning British writer Salman Rushdie to death.

"We can't expect big changes soon to Franco-Iranian relations," Mr. Pons said.

He said he discussed with Mr. Rafsanjani the thorny issue of the Rushdie fatwa, passed by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in response to the novel, *The Satanic Verses*, judged blasphemous by many Muslims.

Mr. Pons had already raised the issue which has poisoned Iranian-EU relations for seven years as soon as he arrived here Sunday in talks with Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati.

Israel's options limited in response to bombings

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Israelis gritted their teeth and some demanded swift reprisals against militants who launched their bloodiest strike ever with two suicide bombings.

In response, Prime Minister Shimon Peres sealed borders with the West Bank and Gaza Strip and suspended ties with Yasser Arafat's self-rule government.

But neither measure was expected to last long — an indication that Israel's long-term options are limited.

Mr. Peres himself said he would not freeze the process as his right-wing Likud opposition is demanding and would go forward with the next steps in the peace process.

These include the withdrawal of most Israeli troops from Hebron in late March and the start of talks on sensitive issues like Jerusalem and the future of Jewish settlements in May.

Military action also was unlikely.

"The problem is known: in the face of a lone terrorist who is ready to commit

suicide, neither we nor any other country has found a comprehensive solution," said Police Minister Moshe Shahal.

Jamil Hamami, a spokesman for the militant Islamic group Hamas in Jerusalem, said tough measures would only backfire.

"Any repressive measure taken in reaction will have a backlash," he warned.

In a leaflet, Hamas claimed responsibility for the car-bomb attacks in that killed 25 people and wounded scores of others Sunday. It said they were in reprisal for the Jan. 5 assassination of Yahiya Ayash, the master bomb maker known as "the engineer."

Hamas made an offer: Militants would stop suicide bombings if Israel would free Palestinian prisoners, including Hamas spiritual guide Sheikh Ahmad Yassin.

David Kimche, head of the Israel council on foreign relations, said radicals used the killing of Ayash and the anniversary of the 1994 Hebron massacre as pretexts.

Their real goal was to halt the peace process.

"They will find any excuse they can to continue terrorism, especially before the elections," said Mr. Kimche, former director-general of the foreign ministry. "They are absolutely determined to change the government."

The bombings, which he expected to continue, were a "bad blow" to Mr. Peres' election chances, Mr. Kimche said.

Palestinians say the only way to end the cycle of violence and reprisal is to change conditions on the ground: end land confiscation, release thousands of Palestinian prisoners and allow free travel and trade between Israel and the autonomous areas.

Closing the borders with the autonomous West Bank and Gaza Strip has reduced violence but also caused more anger and unrest among Palestinians cut off from jobs in Israel.

"Collective punishment measures cannot solve the question of violence," said Hanan Ashrawi, a member of

the newly-elected Palestinian self-rule council.

"They create more tension and pressure and instability and are conducive to more violence," she said. "The only way to stop the cycle of violence is to make the peace process effective on the ground and remove the causes of friction."

More than 60,000 Palestinians work in Israel and bring in \$4 million a day.

Samir Abdullah, a Palestinian economist, said a long-term closure would bring about a collapse of the Palestinian economy and weaken Mr. Arafat's Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

"The closure influences all aspects of life, and the Palestinian economy will be victim to a whirlwind of unemployment. More factories and institutions will close," he said.

"The closure delays violence but does not end it. To end violence, it is important for people to feel the fruits of peace."

Mr. Peres indicated he agreed, saying Sunday that a

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 773111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
14:00	The Flintstones
14:30	Speed Racer
14:50	Billye the Science Guy
15:20	Islamic Antiquities in Jordan
16:00	Drama — Okavango
17:00	Children's Programme — Sophie
17:30	Series — Le Dôme de la Côte
19:00	The Journal
19:15	Magazine — Sports Et Musique
19:30	News Headlines
19:35	Concert — Evening Shade
20:00	The Nature of Things
20:25	The Bold and the Beautiful
21:10	Under the Sun "My Country"
22:00	News in English
22:25	Drama — Airwolf
23:20	The Silk Road
00:30	Second Thoughts
PRAYER TIMES	
04:52	Fajr
06:09	(Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:49	Dhuhr
15:00	'Asr
17:30	Maghreb
18:47	'Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedieh, Tel. 810740	

Agaba	10 / 22
Deserts	9 / 22
Jordan Valley	3 / 16
Yesterday's high temperatures:	
Amman 12 Agaba 20. Humidity readings: Amman 80 per cent. Agaba 46 per cent.	
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Bilal Al Sayid	890280
Dr. Khalil Abu Marjoub	772797
Dr. Osama Al Hussein	847289
Dr. Mohammed Lubbadh	683585
Firas pharmacy	661912
Fordows pharmacy	778336
Al Asena pharmacy	637055
Natroukh pharmacy	628672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
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Shmeisani pharmacy	637660
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Najib pharmacy	847632
IRBID:	
Dr. Ahmad Qanu	281741
Al Oudh pharmacy	(—)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Mahmoud Abu Mahfouz	986414
Khalifah pharmacy	985417

GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Hussein Medical Centre	R1381/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn	644281/6
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn	644314/1
Abel Amman Maternity	642362
Malhas, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shmeisani	607071
Shmeisani Hospital	699131
University Hospital	843345
Al-Muashar Hospital	657227/9
The Islamic, Abdali	666127/57
Al-Ahli, Abdali	664104/6
Italian, Al-Muhsijreen	777101/13
Al-Bashir, J. Aslrafch	775111/26
Army, ElMarika	891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital	502240/50
Amal Hospital	674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery	865199
ZARQA	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	(09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital	
	(09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital	(09)986732
Al Hikma Medical Hospital	(09)900900
AMMAN	
Princess Basma Hospital	(02)275555
Greck Catholic Hospital	(02)277705
Ibn Al Nafesa Hospital	(02)242703
AQABA:	
Princess Haya Hospital	(03)314111

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ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

08:35 Jeddah (RJ)
09:05 Larnaca (RJ)
09:55	..... Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:59	..... Damascus (RJ)
09:59	..... Jeddah (RJ)
14:45	..... New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
16:00	..... Istanbul (RJ)
16:45	..... Frankfurt (RJ)
17:00	..... Jeddah (adk) (RJ)
17:00	..... Paris (RJ)
17:55	..... Toronto, Montreal (RJ)
18:00	..... Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
13:00	..... Brussels, Vienna (RJ)
18:25	..... Rome (RJ)
18:25	..... London, Berlin (RJ)
18:25	..... Brussels, Vienna (RJ)
23:20	..... Beirut (RJ)
07:20	..... Singapore (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

09:55 Cairo (MS)
10:30 Jeddah (SV)

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

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Home News

Ministry to launch programme to promote self-sufficiency among underprivileged

By Lola Keilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In a bid to reduce the rate of poverty and unemployment and to make up for the hike in the prices of commodities which do not meet with current pay scales, the Ministry of Social Development will introduce small income-generating projects for underprivileged families in all the governorates rather than continue to provide monthly governmental stipends to the poor, Minister of Social Development Hammad Abu Jamous said Tuesday.

According to Mr. Abu Jamous the programme of stipends will be reduced so that a process of encouraging the underprivileged towards self-sufficiency can be implemented.

Mr. Abu Jamous told the Jordan Times that three governmental and semi-governmental organisations will allocate the funds to implement a plan which would in the long-run allow underprivileged members of the society to depend on themselves.

"We plan to bring together the poor and unemployed and set them up with small income-generating projects which would be financed by the government, to enable this sector of the society to become self-sufficient," he said.

According to official figures the unemployment rate stands at 15 per cent, 18 per cent of the society are considered at the poverty level, and the recent price hikes in basic daily commodities compared with recent government pay raises leave a gap of 70 per cent.

"The prices of commodities in the past 10 years have gone up 90 per cent, while government salaries have risen 20 per cent, leaving a gap of 70 per cent," said the minister.

The ministry along with the National Aid Fund, the Zakat Fund, and the Development and Employment Fund will provide interest-free loans to eligible citizens. According to the minister, 25 per cent of the loan will be written-off as an incentive for successful projects.

Mr. Abu Jamous stressed that a feasibility study for each project would be carried out through the ministry, before proceeding.

He stressed on the importance of the practicality of each project and its adapt-

Merchant gets death sentence for murder of his secretary

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Criminal Court Tuesday sentenced a merchant to death for the murder of his 23-year-old secretary on Oct. 23, 1994.

The victim, Maysoun Tawfiq, was reported missing by her family after she failed to return home or to report to work, according to the prosecution.

Ms. Tawfiq's brother told the court that he received a tip from a friend that his sister might have travelled to Syria.

The brother went to Damascus where he was told by Syrian police that a woman fitting his sister's description was found dead in a deserted area outside the capital. The brother positively identified Ms. Tawfiq.

According to the prosecution, the defendant, Mustafa Abu Hamidah, admitted to having an affair with Ms. Tawfiq, his secretary, and that the woman was pregnant.

Under preliminary questioning, Abu Hamidah denied any knowledge of Ms. Tawfiq's whereabouts. But investigations discovered that Jordanian border police records showed both the defendant and the victim travelled to Syria on the same day.

The prosecution charged that Abu Hamidah lured Ms. Tawfiq to Damascus on the pretence of marrying her, but with the intent to kill her.

The court found the defendant guilty of premeditated murder and sentenced him to death.

Abu Hamidah is the third person to be sentenced to death by the Criminal Court since the beginning of the year.

The verdict will automatically be reviewed by the Court of Cassation within 30 days.

U.S. firm studies Wadi Mousa sewerage needs

Ministry expects increased tourism to Petra

WADI MOUSA (Petra) — An American firm is currently conducting a feasibility study on laying a sewerage network within the boundaries of Wadi Mousa and the ancient city of Petra, said Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Saleh Irsheidat Tuesday.

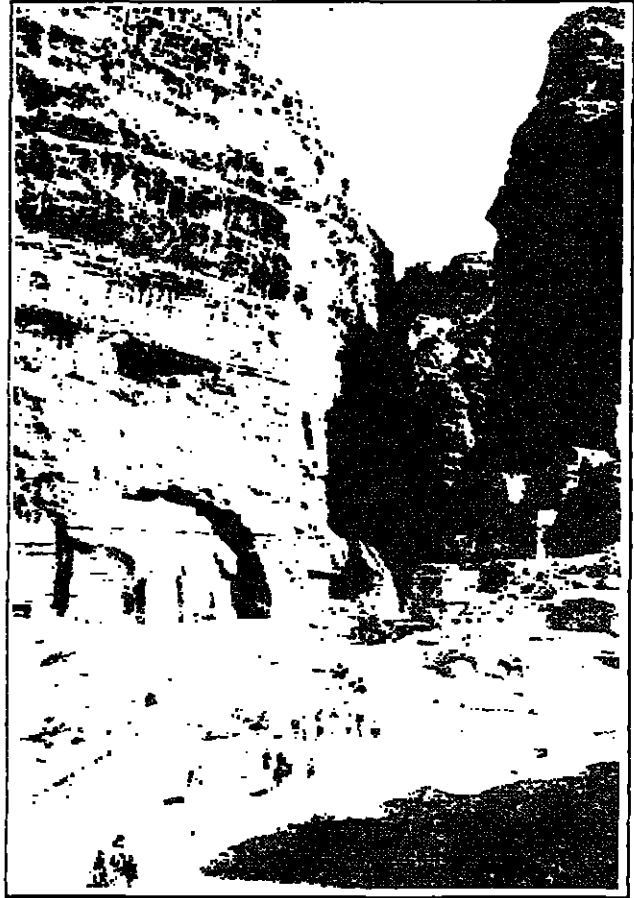
Speaking during an inspection visit to the area, Dr. Irsheidat said the ministry has received notification that the U.S. will be willing to finance the construction of the sewerage and sanitary facility at a cost of \$10 million.

In the meantime, said the minister, the hotels in the Petra region should find their own means to ensure sanitation — an urgent requirement in view of the growing number of tourists to the Petra region.

He said that following the signing of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty, visitors to Petra increased to unprecedented levels. He added that he expects 1996 to witness even greater numbers of visitors.

Of the more than one million tourists to Jordan in 1996, the ministry estimates that most of them visited the ancient site.

Accompanied by ministry and local officials as well Wadi Mousa Mayor Mohammad Hasanat, Dr. Irsheidat inspected the areas where an overall



A view of Petra (photo by Ainsley Floyd)

development project is to be carried out.

Earlier this month a local firm signed a \$500,000 contract with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities to conduct a study for the development of the Petra region.

The three-phase study which is being financed from a Japanese government grant aims at creating a better and more attractive tourist area in Petra and contributing to the development of the whole of Wadi Mousa region, estimated at 300-square-kilometres.

Government keen to fight pollution caused by cement factories

FUHEIS (J.T.) — Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Abdul Razzak Tubeishat opened at Fuheis Tuesday a seminar on environmental pollution caused by the smoke and dust caused by the cement factories in the city and stressed the government's keenness to deal with the problem of pollution in various parts of the country, particularly in Fuheis.

The pollution caused by the cement factories in Fuheis is on the top of the ministry's priority list, said the minister at the meeting, which was attended by Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Hashem Dabbas and Minister of Water and Irrigation Samir Kwar as well as the mayors of Fuheis and the neighbouring town of Mahis, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Dr Tubeishat said that his ministry was in constant contact with the management of the Jordan Cement Factories Company (JCFC) which last year embarked on an ambitious project to drastically reduce the amount of pollutants from the factories' chimneys in cooperation with German and Danish firms.

The project entails installing equipment to absorb the dust and smoke rising from the kilns of the factory, according to the factory's management.

Hani Khammash, advisor to the JCFC manager, told the seminar that the equipment are not expected to absorb 100 per cent of the pollutants, but that they will contribute to the disposal of most of the waste materials and will reduce dust and smoke from which the local people have been complaining.

According to the management, the factories, which were established in 1951 to produce 1500 tonnes of cement daily, are now producing nearly 6000 tonnes per day and the equipment were urgently needed to control the dust and smoke and curb pollution caused to the city.

Taking part in the seminar which was organised by the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature were local inhabitants who presented their views about the pollution of their city.

Jordan returns to Milan for '96 tourism fair

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan will once again participate in the annual tourism fair known as BIT (Borsa Internazionale del Turismo) in Milan, Italy.

This year's fair is being held from Feb. 28 to March 3, and the Kingdom's participation, according to the Jordan Tourism Board (JTB), Marketing Director Dana Atallah, aims at promoting the country as a tourist destination and increasing the number of Italian tourists to Jordan.

Participating in the event are eight Jordanian tour operators — mostly top organisations working with the Italian market — the JTB, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and Royal Jordanian, the national air carrier.

According to Ministry of Tourism Secretary-General Akram Masarweh, Jordan "needs to continue participating in international tourism fairs as they are the right fora for our exposure to the world."

The Jordanian stand will hold special activities at the fair, according to Ms. Atallah who mentioned a raffle for a round-trip ticket and accommodation to Jordan as one attraction.

On the sidelines, the JTB and the ministry representative will be meeting with top tour operators and Italian trade magazine representatives in order to help promote tourism in the Kingdom.

"Usually we benefit from doing official and technical contacts with official parties or the private sector. We try to facilitate the linkage between Jordanian tour operators and hoteliers and their counterparts from different parts of the world," said Mr. Masarweh.

The operators, according to Ms. Atallah, plan to introduce new products, which in this case means additional sites, as well as new programmes (different package tours including more sites), in an effort not only to increase tourist numbers but also their average length of stay in the Kingdom.

Italian tourists form the third largest European group to visit Jordan.

Figures for 1995 from the Ministry of Tourism show that Italian tourists to the Kingdom numbered 29,000. The average stay in Jordan of Italian tourists is also among the highest of national groups.

The BIT, now in its 16th year, is a specialised market where foreign and Italian tour operators meet to show their offers and to accept the proposals to sell a tourist product.

It attracts thousands of exhibitors and visitors from all over the world, together with professional operators and journalists.

Businessmen review trade ties with visiting Moroccan team

AMMAN (Petra) — A visiting Moroccan trade delegation held talks Tuesday with Jordanian businessmen and government officials and said they were examining investment opportunities in the Kingdom and seeking to conclude agreements with the Jordanian business community on trade exchanges.

Atta Saleh, head of the group, told the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce that the Moroccan private sector hopes to bolster trade ties with its Jordanian counterpart noting that industrial activities in the two countries were similar in nature to a large extent.

Mr. Saleh also outlined Morocco's investment opportunities and the activities of the free zones in that country.

Federation Chairman Haidar Murad urged the Moroccan chambers of commerce to increase their cooperation with Jordan's businesses and outlined the Kingdom's various incentives and privileges offered to investors. He said the Jordanian commercial sector contributes by 10 per cent to the country's gross national product and employs nearly 15 per cent of the Kingdom's workforce.

Mr. Murad urged the Moroccan private sector to promote trade exchanges with Jordan beyond the limits of a quota reached through protocols between the two governments.

He said Jordan's total exports which last year amounted to \$1.5 billion, registering 25 per cent over the previous year, included agricultural, engineering, chemical, construction and pharmaceutical products.

According to Mr. Murad, Jordan exported to Morocco goods worth \$1.12 million in the first 11 months of 1995 and imported \$4,624,400 worth of Moroccan goods.

The Moroccan delegation later met Mohammad Halaiga, director general of the Jordan Exports and Development and Commercial Centres Corporation (JEDCO) and discussed ways of adjusting the balance of trade between the two countries.

Jordanian women with foreign spouses seek equality in Citizenship Law

By Alia Toukan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Um Ahmad, a Jordanian, is married to an Iraqi, but like many other women in her situation, her husband and children are not entitled to a Jordanian passport because her husband is not Jordanian.

Her son, Ahmad, is reluctant to finish his last few courses at the University of Jordan. Upon completion of his studies, he will no longer be eligible for a student visa. Without a visa or a work permit he must leave the country.

Abu Samir is an Egyptian national married to a Jordanian. They have nine children whom they are unable to properly feed or send to school because Abu Samir has no regular income. He is unable to find employment as he cannot afford his passport renewal and work permit fees, each costing JD 120.

Abu Samir's problems are compounded by his poor health. He is a diabetic and requires regular and costly hospital visits. As a non-Jordanian he is not eligible for free medical benefits provided for underprivileged citizens.

Um Ahmad and Abu Samir's cases are but a few in which foreign men married to Jordanian women face substantial social and financial obstacles that affect all members of their families.

Jordanian women married to foreigners have been waiting for a change in the Citizenship Law, deemed to be discriminatory by many lawyers and human rights activists.

The citizenship law stipulates that a child's nationality follows that of the father, regardless of whether the mother is Jordanian, or if the child is born in Jordan.

As such, children of non-Jordanian fathers are categorised as foreigners, Deeba Abu Halawa, a lawyer, told the Jordan Times.

In the case of a foreign woman married to a Jordanian man, Minister of Information Marwan Muasher explained that the wife is entitled to the Jordanian passport after three years of marriage. There is no law granting such rights to a foreign man married to a Jordanian woman, he said.

Dr. Muasher noted that there is a law granting non-Jordanians, whether male or female, a passport after being a resident of the Kingdom for five years if the person is not Arab, or 15 years if he/she is Arab. He explained the discrepancy citing an Arab League resolution which states that no Arab national can hold two Arab passports simultaneously.

Critics of the citizenship law contend that it is discriminatory and is in contradiction to the Constitution which states all Jordanians are equal before the law.

Asma Khader, a prominent lawyer, human rights activist and president of the Jordanian Women's Union (JWU), told the Jordan Times that the JWU presented 12 recommendations to parliament at the end of 1993 on the status of women. One of those recommendations, she said, was an amendment to the Citizenship Law. Although Parliament action was promised on the 12 points, there was no delivery, said Ms. Khader, adding that numerous complaints and petitions were also sent to the prime minister and minister of interior concerning the issue of citizenship over the years, but little has been achieved.

Ms. Khader charged that there has been no change in the status of the Citizenship Law because of what she sees as the perception of women as being inferior to men.

Yet it appears that in rare instances, loopholes in the system allow for some cases to be passed through where non-Jordanian husbands are not only facilitated with their work permits and residencies, but are actually given passports.

For example, a well-off Jordanian woman married to a Lebanese man told the Jordan Times that she was finally able to obtain passports for her husband and children by way of personal connections.

Consequences of discriminatory policies can take their toll on a family, particularly the children.

Social constraints are faced by children of non-Jordanian fathers as they live in a society that stresses lineage from the father.

One Jordanian woman married to a French man said that even though her children have been residents of Jordan for more than 15 years, they have never been accepted as truly Jordanian.

Ms. Abu Halawa said that while children of Jordanian mothers married to foreign men are automatically given residency upon birth, this provision only applies till the age of 18. After that, the children must either obtain a student visa or a work permit to continue to live in the country.

Foreign husbands must also have a valid work permit to renew their residency every year.

Ms. Abu Halawa added that while the children of non-Jordanian fathers could enroll in private schools, in most cases they are not admitted into public schools, unless they have special permission from the Ministry of Interior.

Some "Foreign" husbands and children often also face financial obstacles. Um Ahmad, for example, told the Jordan Times that her husband has to settle for menial jobs with a lower working wage, because, she said, Jordanian employers are aware that Iraqis desperately need jobs.

Upon his appointment as Prime Minister last month, Abdul Karim Kabariti directed Minister of Interior Awad Khlifiat to "facilitate" residencies and work permits for foreign husbands of Jordanian women.

Although this move has been welcomed by many, the general perception is that more than cosmetic changes are required.

Commenting on the Prime Minister's initiative, Amman Deputy, Toujan Faisal said "it is an improvement, and definitely a step forward, but it is not a final solution," adding that the request is only an administrative step, and is not a change in the law.

Non-Jordanian husbands and their children must, eventually get the citizenship, she said.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILMS

- * *"Far From the Madding Crowd,"* at the British Council at 7:00 p.m.
- * *Cinema Film "La Tierra Prometida"* (in Spanish) at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman, at 7:00 p.m.

JAZZ

- * Jazz evening in celebration of Black History Month at the American Center at 6:00 p.m. (Evening features jazz music, videos and a discussion on the history of jazz).

LECTURE

- * *"Deconverte du Centre de Ressources,"* by Frédérique Pons at the French Cultural Centre at 6:00 p.m.

POETRY RECITAL

- * Recital of poems by Iraqi poet AB AL'Alaq at the Phoenix Gallery, Gardens Street, at 7:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

- * Works by Iraqi artist Himat Mohammad Ali entitled, "Meditation" at Darat Al Fuman, Jabal Weibdeh, (until March 28).
- * Engravings by French artists at the French Cultural Centre (until Feb. 29).
- * Abstract (plastic) art by Syrian artist Nazem Hamdan at the Royal Cultural Centre (until March 5).
- * Abstract (plastic) art by Syrian artist Nazem Hamdan at the Royal Cultural Centre (until March 5).
- * Abstract (plastic) art by Miryat Emile Wahhab at the Housing Bank Complex Gallery (until March 5).
- * Paintings by Jordanian and other Arab artists at Alia Art Gallery (until March 5).

Northern Ireland row flares after Major wins key vote

LONDON (R) — Prime Minister John Major sought Tuesday to put a row over British arms sales to Iraq behind him after winning a tight victory in parliament.

But a new row flared over whether Northern Ireland parties tried to do a deal in return for support in the crucial vote.

The knife-edge victory, by just 320 votes to 319 in the 651-seat House of Commons, after Monday's debate on British arms sales to Iraq before the 1991 Gulf War means Mr. Major does not have to call a vote of confidence in his government.

Newspapers said it increased the chances of Mr. Major's ruling Conservatives, who trail badly in opinion polls, solidifying on until close to the May 1997 deadline for a general election.

In financial markets Tuesday, the pound held on to its one penny overnight gain chalked up after the vote.

Questions were immediately raised over whether Mr. Major was held to ransom by Northern Ireland parties ahead of the vote.

Northern Ireland ministers accused the Ulster Unionist Party, which supports continued British rule in Northern Ireland and holds a crucial nine seats in the House of Commons, of seeking to extract concessions from Mr. Major before the vote.

The parliamentary arithmetic for Mr. Major was especially tight because last week's resignation by Conservative Peter Thurnham — the third MP to leave the party in four months — cut his majority to two.

Two Conservative MPs voted with the opposition and all nine Ulster Unionists voted against the government.

Mr. Major won thanks to the abstention of three MPs from another Northern Ireland grouping, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP).

The row complicates Mr. Major's efforts to revive the peace process after three Irish Republican Army bombs in London.

Minority Liberal Democrat leader Paddy Ashdown said: "These are murky waters and we will want to see exactly what has happened and that may not emerge until later on today."

"It is a tragedy, a tragedy that the whole of Irish politics is now being played into every decision that is made in the House of Commons... I personally think the government's bottom line credibility has now been completely broken."

Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble told reporters he had sought no deal and no deal was made.

"It's not true," Mr. Trimble told a radio reporter. Mr. Trimble said he sought assurances from Mr. Major that he had not cut a deal with other Northern Irish parties about the form of an election to pave the way for all-party peace talks.

Mr. Trimble said he had been worried that a deal had been done on election rules which would have been less favourable to his party and would have benefited the DUP, led by Protestant firebrand preacher Ian Paisley, as well as the main nationalist party, the Social Democratic and Labour Party, which wants a united Ireland.

Deputy Prime Minister Michael Heseltine said there were no agreements with any Northern Ireland parties before the vote.

Mr. Heseltine added that Mr. Major told Mr. Trimble Monday night: "The peace process is too important for me (the prime minister) to be in any way associated with dealing behind closed doors."

Monday's debate was on a report by senior Judge Sir Richard Scott on whether ministers misled parliament over the government's role in the sale of arms-making equipment to Iraq.

Judge Scott's report was critical of two ministers. But the government, which Monday announced a review of licensing procedures for arms sales to defuse criticism, said the report had shown no cover-up or conspiracy and it had been vindicated.

The opposition Labour Party said the report would haunt Mr. Major and the government's support was now shaky.

Labour's foreign affairs spokesman Robin Cook said: "We now have a government which is down to a majority of one. That majority is dependent on Mr. Paisley and his supporters."

Burundi tells OAU 'no' to international force

NAIROBI (AFP) — Burundi's prime minister pleaded Tuesday against any "military solutions" to end ethnic strife in his country in a letter to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) meeting which set Burundi as a priority, a copy here showed.

Antoine Nduwayo told OAU ministers, who opened talks Monday in Addis Ababa, that military action in Burundi could thwart the tenuous peace process in the volatile eastern African nation bordering Rwanda.

The Burundi government is resolutely opposed to any form of military intervention in the country, which has seen ethnic massacres between its Hutu majority and Tutsi elite, but so far not on the scale of the carnage that left at least 500,000 dead in Rwanda's 1994 civil war.

The U.N. Security Council Monday discussed a proposal by U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali for a 25,000-member multinational standby force to intervene in case of ethnic catastrophe but failed to reach a consensus on the plan. Council President Madeline Albright said afterwards creation of a force was deemed "premature" while diplomats said there were fears it could spark fresh massacres in Burundi.

Mr. Nduwayo's letter, a copy of which was received here, to OAU President

Salim Ahmed Salim recalled an earlier letter sent on Feb. 13 to the U.N. secretary general in which the government "clearly expressed" its opposition to any international force.

The letter expressed "our surprise to see the U.N. secretary general was persisting in proposing a military intervention to the Security Council."

"My country hopes the OAU and its secretary general will give concrete and urgent support for internal solutions and to set aside any military solutions that would constitute a step backward for the peace process," the letter said.

Since the Feb. 13 letter was sent, "the situation in Burundi confirms that the situation is not getting worse but moving towards relaxation and understanding," Mr. Nduwayo's letter said.

It urged that priority should now be given to "creating conditions that would favour a national debate and lead to a national pact on cohabitation and a constitution more adapted to the reality of the nation's situation."

Burundi has been prey to political-ethnic trouble since an attempted coup d'etat in October 1993, during which then President Melchior Ndadaye, the country's first Hutu president, was assassinated. The incident touched off ethnic bloodshed that left at least 50,000 people dead.

Chirac to sell French industry in Asia

PARIS (R) — President Jacques Chirac embarked Tuesday on his first visit to Asia since taking office, casting himself as travelling salesman for French industry and a self-proclaimed champion of nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Chirac arrives in Singapore for a two-day visit Wednesday before flying on to a 25-nation European Union-Asia summit in Bangkok, Thailand, described by aides as "head of 'enterprise France'."

The president is keen to encourage French firms to invest more in the world's fastest-growing markets in East Asia, and encourage Asian companies to invest in France.

He alienated many Asians by ordering a resumption of nuclear tests in French Polynesia after taking office last year, but halted the tests early following the sixth last month and has said Paris will sign this month a treaty making the South Pacific nuclear-free.

Mr. Chirac is taking along five chairmen of small and medium-sized businesses and will cite Singapore as a showcase for the French economic presence in Asia.

In a speech to business leaders at the South East Asian Studies Institute Thursday, he will set out "his ambition for France and Europe in Asia, his vision of the world and of future relations between the continents", his spokeswoman Catherine Colonna told reporters.

The French leader is keen to see the Asian "dragons" invest in France and form industrial and financial alliances with Europe, aides said.

Some 400 French companies are working in Singapore and have invested about six billion francs (\$1.2 billion), mainly in the financial sector (64 per cent) and in industry (25 per cent).



U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher (left) holds a press conference with Central American leaders after a group meeting in San Salvador Monday. The leaders unanimously backed the U.S. in its stand-off with Cuba, as Mr. Christopher offered to fight in Congress for new trade privileges for the region. With Mr. Christopher are Presidents Armando Calderon Sol of El Salvador (2nd left), Carlos Reina of Honduras (3rd left) and Jose Maria Figueres of Costa Rica (center photo).

C. Americans back U.S. in Cuba crisis

SAN SALVADOR (R) — Central American leaders Monday unanimously backed the United States in its stand-off with Cuba as U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher offered to fight in Congress for new trade privileges for the region.

At a luncheon with Mr. Christopher, the five leaders supported the U.S. view that Cuba's shooting down of two U.S. civilian planes Saturday violated international law, even though Havana said the planes were within Cuban airspace.

"Central America as a whole at this meeting has condemned the violence that was used in the shooting down of the two civilian aircraft by the Cuban military," Salvadoran President Armando Calderon Sol told a news conference.

"We have been unanimous in supporting President Bill Clinton's decisive action in going to the United Nations to seek redress for these actions," he added, calling the U.S. move "an example to the entire world."

Mr. Calderon Sol did not specifically mention a string of unilateral sanctions announced in Washington by Mr. Clinton to punish Cuba, but U.S. officials said the Central Americans supported those too.

The officials said Mr. Christopher was "very gratified" to receive the support from the leaders, who also included the presidents of Honduras and Costa Rica, the vice-president of Nicaragua, the prime minister of Belize and a minister from Guatemala.

Mr. Christopher's visit to El Salvador was the first stop of a five-nation tour of Latin America and the Caribbean that has been dominated so far by the downing of the two private planes flown by Cuban exiles.

Earlier Monday, Mr. Christopher denounced Cuba's "blatant violation of international law," in a speech to

Belarus president arrives in Moscow

MOSCOW (AFP) — Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko arrived in Moscow Tuesday for a four-day visit aimed at tightening economic and other links with Russia, the ITAR-TASS news agency reported.

Mr. Lukashenko went straight to the Kremlin for a meeting with his Russian counterpart Boris Yeltsin.

Speaking in Minsk before his departure, Mr. Lukashenko had said: "I hope to raise with the Russian president the question for future integration (between the two countries) and the fate of our peoples," the agency reported.

Since his election in July 1994 Mr. Lukashenko, a president very much in the Soviet mould, has urged closer links with Moscow.

The two leaders are expected to sign a political declaration on closer integration of the two countries, which already maintain a customs union and several economic cooperation agreements.

Mr. Lukashenko was to meet later Tuesday with Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and Russian MPs before an official dinner at the Kremlin.

On Wednesday he is to meet Moscow Mayor Yuri Lujkov and hold a press conference before flying to the Tyumen region of Siberia to visit a joint Russia-Belarus refinery project.

The visit will also be aimed at settling financial disputes.

Minsk claims Moscow owes it some \$300 million in financial and ecological compensation for having 81 SS-25 strategic missiles formerly based on its soil, and another \$114 million for having Russian troops stationed on its territory.

In addition, Belarussian companies have allegedly lost \$250 million following the freezing of the assets of the former Soviet Foreign Trade Bank.

Russia meanwhile is demanding \$775 million from Belarus in overdue payment of energy bills, and another \$470 million for repayment of a loan.

2 ex-policemen held after Albania blast

TIRANA (R) — Albanian police arrested two former Communist secret police officials in connection with a car bomb blast which killed five people and injured 30 Monday.

Two former officials of the now-disbanded secret police, the Sigurimi, were detained hours after a car packed with 50 kilograms of TNT ripped through a central Tirana street next to a supermarket.

"Two former state security officials have been arrested in connection with the attack this morning on the Vefa Supermarket in central Tirana," police said.

The Albanian News Agency (ATA) quoted police as saying one of the officials had connections with the former Soviet secret police, the KGB.

President Sali Berisha condemned the explosion as a terrorist attack, the first serious act of political violence in Albania since the country toppled communism in 1990.

"This is the most terrible terrorist act... This is a fascist act organised by the forces of the former secret

police," Mr. Berisha told Albanian Radio. "There is no doubt that this was a political act."

Four people were killed immediately in the blast Monday morning near the newly-opened supermarket and a fifth, a pensioner, died of his injuries later in hospital.

Three other people were in serious condition in hospital, doctors said.

Police were also believed to be hunting for a man with long hair who was seen leaving the car which later exploded.

The blast, which gouged a small crater in the road, threw the car 10 metres and set the store, owned by one of Albania's biggest concerns, Vefa Holdings, on fire. Flying shards of glass injured passers-by.

An emergency cabinet meeting chaired by Mr. Berisha offered the equivalent of \$50,000 for information leading to the arrest of the bombers.

The president said "the murderers had intended to kill as many people as possible" and wanted the explosion to create maximum destruction.

Mr. Berisha's ruling Democratic Party has often pointed the finger at former agents of the communist Sigurimi secret police, accusing them of attempting to raise tension in the impoverished Balkan nation.

Albania is scheduled to hold its third free general election by the end of May.

The Sigurimi was disbanded in 1990 after a popular uprising ousted 40 years of hardline Stalinist rule, but the government feared that some agents were still active, operating under cover to try to undermine democracy.

Albania's main opposition Socialist Party, heirs to the former Communists, reacted with horror at the bomb blast.

"The Albanian Socialist Party utterly condemns this unprecedented terrorist act in our country and we support the government's measure to hunt down and punish those responsible," the party said in a statement.

Fruit shaped like Hindu deity draws devotees

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP)

— A papaya fruit naturally shaped like the Hindu deity Lord Ganesha has been drawing thousands of worshippers here, with devotees saying the fruit has an aura capable of energising people.

"You stand near it and observe and the energy will get into you," said owner M. Kanthavelu, 41, whose house has been thronged in recent days after the discovery of the deity-shaped papaya in his garden. The foot-long (30-centimetre long) oblong fruit, usually smooth-skinned, has grooves along its sides resembling the trunk of the elephant-headed Ganesha, the Hindu symbol of wisdom and wealth.

Mr. Kanthavelu said he had jokingly promised his statue of Lord Ganesha the first fruit from his papaya tree but was shocked to find the fruit taking on Ganesha's features when placed on the altar table.

"I rang up a priest and he came over and said Lord Ganesha had come in the form of a papaya," the insurance marketing manager said.

He said he would hold a special prayer for the two-kilogramme (4.4-pound) fruit, adorned with garlands and studded with eyes of silver foil, before it rots.

"Thelma and Louise" victim tells of nightmare date

HOUSTON (R) — A victim of the duo known as "Thelma and Louise" testified they handcuffed him and stole \$18,000 from his home during a date that turned into a robbery. The testimony came on the first day of the trial of Rose Marie Turford on charges she and Joyce Stevens used a bogus dating service to lure robbery victims.

Stevens pleaded guilty to three counts of aggravated robbery in exchange for a 10-year prison sentence. The women, dubbed "Thelma and Louise" after the movie starring Geena Davis and Susan Sarandon in which two women go on a crime spree, were captured in Toronto after jumping bail.

Russian language checkmates court in lipstick theft

HONG KONG (R) — A Russian sailor posed a problem for a Hong Kong court after his arrest for stealing a stick of lipstick — he said he could speak no English and the charge was dropped because no Russian-speaker could be found. Anatoly Podvalkin, 47, was charged with stealing lipstick from a Hong Kong shop. But when he appeared in court, the prosecutor said no interpreter was available, the South China Morning Post newspaper reported. As the sailor's ship was due to leave port Tuesday, the court let him go rather than have him stranded in Hong Kong.

Cricketer's apology not good enough for some

RAWALPINDI (R) — Some Pakistani sports reporters say they are still not satisfied with England captain Michael Atherton's apology for calling a local journalist a "buffoon". Abdul Mohi Shah, secretary of the Rawalpindi-Islamabad Sports Journalists Association, said an apology should be given to his association and should come from Atherton personally rather than the England team management. Atherton made the remark at post-match news conference Sunday. His apology was issued in the form of a statement read out by England assistant manager John Barclay.



Actor Haing S. Ngor, shown at the 1993 premiere of his film Heaven and Earth, was found shot to death next to his automobile near downtown Los Angeles. No motive has been established for the murder according to the Los Angeles Police department. Ngor won a best supporting actor Academy Award for his role in The Killing Fields (Reuters photo)

U.S. police seeking clues in Killing Fields actor's death

LOS ANGELES (R) — Mystery surrounds the murder of Academy Award-winning actor Haing Ngor, a Cambodian refugee who survived the "killing fields" of the Khmer Rouge only to be gunned down outside his home in Los Angeles.

Investigators said they had no suspects, no witnesses, no motive and little evidence so far to help them solve the murder, which took place Sunday night at Ngor's apartment building in the city's Chinatown section.

Ngor, a refugee doctor who won an Oscar for his portrayal of a Cambodian journalist in the 1984 film The Killing Fields, was shot to death while returning home from a gathering of family and friends. He was 45 years old.

"We're not discounting any possibility. It may be a robbery. It may be something else," said police Lt. Al Moen. But he admitted that detectives had few leads.

There was speculation in the city's Cambodian community that Ngor may have been the target of a political assassination for his outspoken criticism of the Khmer Rouge reign of terror and his tireless support for refugees.

But one law-enforcement source said the shooting had all the markings of a "follow-home" robbery that turned violent.

Peter Quach, a Cambodian who met Ngor in 1979 while both were living in a Thai refugee

camp, said his friend and neighbour had only recently returned from a trip to Cambodia.

Trained as a doctor, Ngor was captured and tortured following the 1975 takeover by the Khmer Rouge rebels, who overthrew the U.S.-backed Cambodian government and ushered in one of the most murderous regimes in history.

When a Vietnamese invasion ousted the Khmer Rouge four years later, Ngor escaped to Thailand, and in 1980 he settled in the United States. He resumed his medical career and in 1984 was cast in The Killing Fields, based on the memoirs of New York Times correspondent Sidney Schanberg.

In his acting debut, Ngor played a role that mirrored his own survival story. He portrayed journalist Dith Pran, Mr. Schanberg's assistant who stayed behind to help the American reporter after the U.S. evacuation in 1975.

While Mr. Schanberg soon managed to leave the country safely, Pran was captured and imprisoned before making his own escape years later. The Killing Fields is a graphically realistic chronicle of his odyssey through a nation torn by war.

Ngor's performance earned him an Oscar for best supporting actor, making him the first non-professional to receive an Academy Award since 1946.

Some 400 French companies are working in Singapore and have invested about six billion francs (\$1.2 billion), mainly in the financial sector (64 per cent) and in industry (25 per cent).

Buchanan sees Arizona win, Dole counts on Dakotas

PHOENIX (R) — Senate majority leader Bob Dole Tuesday anticipated his 1996 presidential primary victories in North and South Dakota, but right-wing columnist Pat Buchanan hoped to strike a powerful blow by winning in Arizona.

Seventy-five delegates to the Republican National Convention are at stake in the three states, 39 of them in Arizona. The convention will select the Republican nominee to challenge President Bill Clinton in the Nov. 5 election, with 96 of the 1,990 delegates needed to ensure nomination.

Sen. Dole's campaign was rocked by surprise defeats to Mr. Buchanan in New Hampshire last week and to publisher Steve Forbes in Delaware over the weekend. He shook up his campaign staff Monday, firing his deputy manager and chief pollster in a bid to refocus his message.

Mr. Buchanan has been charging around Arizona in search of another win that would impart tremendous momentum to his populist, anti-free trade, anti-big business campaign.

Arizona has never held a primary before and the Republicans have organized only 111 polling places across the state, compared to the more than 800 usually available for state-wide elections. Low turnout is thought to help Mr. Buchanan, whose supporters are more dedicated to their candidate.

"I'm beginning to think I'm going all the way. I believe if we win Arizona, we'll win the nomination. South Carolina comes four days later. That place will be blazing if we win Arizona," Mr. Buchanan told reporters Monday.

Arizona Sen. John McCain, who is backing Sen. Dole, acknowledged Monday that Mr. Buchanan could well win the southwestern border state, where Mr. Buchanan's harsh rhetoric against illegal immigration from Mexico has found a ready audience.

"Pat Buchanan can win this race. It depends on the Dole campaign's ability to motivate our voters and get them out to vote," he said.

In theory, Sen. Dole should be safe in the Dakotas, which are predominantly farming states similar to his native Kansas. The 72-year-old veteran swept both states in 1988 when he last ran for president and he refers to himself as their honorary senator.

However, Mr. Buchanan was making a late surge in South Dakota and local activists said he could well take some delegates away from Sen. Dole by winning more than 20 per cent of the vote.

Mr. Buchanan himself planned to leave Arizona early Tuesday and head to the next major contest in Georgia and South Carolina, where his religious message will have strong appeal to the powerful Christian Coalition.

South Carolina votes on next Saturday, and Georgia is one of eight states holding primaries on March 5, five of them in politically-moderate New England. That could be Sen. Dole's best chance of halting the Buchanan charge.

One prime goal for Sen. Dole is knocking Mr. Forbes and former Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander out of the race. Both are taking votes away from him and dividing the anti-Buchanan forces in the Republican Party.

"You have three men splitting the moderate vote — Dole, Forbes and Alexander," said Patrick Kinney, a political scientist at Arizona State University. "That allows Buchanan to win with only 30 per cent of the vote or less," he said.



Fire fighters attempt to rescue a victim from the stairs of an eight-storey building during a fire Tuesday in the central city of Taichung. The fire, which broke out before dawn and took about an hour to extinguish, killed 13 people and injured 17 (Reuters photo)

Taiwan fire kills 13; arson suspected

TAIPEI (R) — Thirteen people were killed and 17 injured when fire engulfed an eight-storey building in the central Taiwan city of Taichung Tuesday, the second fatal blaze to hit the city in 10 days.

"Thirteen are confirmed dead and 17 are injured and have been sent to hospitals, with four severely hurt," a police officer said by telephone from Taichung.

He added that the blaze, the latest in a series of building fires in Taiwan in recent years, may have been an act of arson.

"Eyewitnesses have told us that they saw a fight just outside the building prior to the fire and some 30 motorcycles parked outside building were all burnt, so we suspect arson," he said.

Taichung District Prosecutor Liu Chia-Fang said he also suspects arson after fire fighters found a corpse on the fourth floor of the eight-story building.

"At the staircase on the fourth floor there was a corpse which had suffered more severe degree of burns than the others. We are investigating whether the person was injured (during a fight) prior to the fire," Mr. Liu said on state television.

The fire, which erupted before dawn on the ground floor, swept only up to the third floor but caused most of its casualties on the upper floors as the building's closed-off design led to heavy smoke rising up the stairs.

The blaze, which lasted for about an hour, dealt another blow to Taichung's public safety record after 17 people were killed in a sauna parlour fire in the city on Feb. 17.

Public buildings have been the sites of several lethal fires in Taiwan in recent years. Many of them are unlicensed entertainment centres or buildings with inadequate fire escape routes.

Chun, Roh to face trial together

SEOUL (R) — Two former South Korean presidents will stand trial together next month on charges of mutiny and sedition stemming from a 1979 military putsch and a later army massacre of civilians, an official said Tuesday.

A spokesman for the Seoul District Criminal Court said Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae-Woo, who are both in detention, would answer charges before a three-judge panel on March 11. About a dozen former associates of the two ex-presidents will also be on trial.

"Mr. Chun, Mr. Roh and other related defendants will be tried together by the same court from March 11," the spokesman said.

Mr. Chun and Mr. Roh — already on trial on separate charges of corruption from their respective presidencies — have been indicted for masterminding the 1979 coup, which propelled Mr. Chun to power in 1980. Mr. Chun picked Mr. Roh as his successor in 1988.

The two men, both retired four-star generals, have also been charged with playing leading roles in a military crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators in the city of Kwangju in May 1980.

The brutal quelling of the popular uprising against military rule in Kwangju and the secrecy over the event for many years is one of the most traumatic chapters in South Korean history.

About 200 pro-democracy campaigners were killed in the assault by official count. Kwangju residents say the death toll was much higher.

The two former presidents face execution if convicted, although it widely believed

they will escape with jail terms.

Late last year parliament passed a law ordered by President Kim Young-Sam — inaugurated in February 1993 as South Korea's first civilian head of state in more than three decades — to punish his two predecessors for their roles in the crackdown.

The law made possible the prosecution of Mr. Chun and Mr. Roh, which President Kim described as "unfortunate but necessary steps to put history to rights". An earlier probe was called off after Mr. Kim said judgment would be left to history.

Those who will stand trial along with Mr. Chun and Mr. Roh include six incumbent or former members of parliament and two former defence ministers.

Among them is Chung Ho-Yong, a lawmaker who quit the ruling New Korea Party in December. Mr. Chung was arrested earlier this month for commanding special warfare troops when they were ordered to Kwangju to suppress the revolt against martial law.

Mr. Chung is also alleged to have ordered members of his forces, trained for combat with Communist North Korea, to open fire at pro-democracy campaigners in the southwestern city.

Prosecutors have said the Kwangju massacre took place as the new military leadership under the then army Major-General Chun tried to follow a series of programmes aimed at seizing political power.

At the start of his corruption trial Monday, Mr. Chun admitted accepting 225.9 billion won (\$289.6 million) from more than 40 businessmen while in office but denied the money was bribes. He said he only accepted "political donations".

Sri Lankan troops kill 15 Tigers in failed village attack

COLOMBO (Agencies) — Security forces repulsed a major attack by Tamil Tiger guerrillas on a Sinhalese village in northeastern Sri Lanka Tuesday, killing at least 15 rebels, the military said.

Troops fired back using automatic weapons and also called in air force planes to attack the guerrillas, a military spokesman said.

The pre-dawn attack was targeted on the village of Ethawetunuwewa, the spokesman said.

"We have killed at least 15 Tigers and recovered three automatic rifles and communication equipment from them," the spokesman said, adding that the rebels managed to kill one civilian before being beaten off. At least five security personnel were wounded.

Last week, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) launched a similar attack against another Sinhalese village and killed 11 people, including four security personnel, in the neighbouring district of Anuradhapura.

The LTTE is leading a protracted campaign for an independent homeland in the island's northern and eastern regions and has been accused of killing hundreds of Sinhalese.

Tigers have been trying to dislodge members of the majority community who are in the northeast where the Tamils, the country's main minority, are concentrated.

Tamil rebels Tuesday accused the Colombo-based press of waging a propaganda war against them and denied a newspaper report which claimed the rebels threatened Japanese and Malaysian missions here.

The LTTE said in a statement from its London office that newspapers published here were collaborating with the government to undermine political aspirations of Tamils.

The LTTE statement denied a report in the privately-owned Sunday Times newspaper saying the Malaysian High Commission here was threatened by the guerrillas because of its support of the Sri Lankan government. The rebels said they would never target an embassy and looked forward to good relations with foreign nations.

Malaysia's High Commissioner Kadir Din had Monday denied the report that the country's embassy had been targeted. "It is unfortunate that they (the Sunday Times) carried this incorrect report," he said.

Last week, the Malaysian government had announced it will crack down against open support for the LTTE in Malaysia and revoke resident visas of foreigners taking part in pro-LTTE demonstrations.

Japanese diplomats have also denied they had been targeted by the rebels.

"The Colombo newspapers are guilty of carrying on a sinister disinformation campaign consistently against the Tamils and the LTTE in order to undermine their political aspirations," the Tigers said.

They also accused Sinhalese reporters working for international news agencies of "deliberately" picking up anti-LTTE stories from the local press and filing reports based on "war propaganda" of the military.

Meanwhile Sri Lanka's Defence Ministry has ordered the army to send four brigadiers and some 200 other personnel on compulsory leave for alleged human rights abuses, the independent island newspaper said Tuesday.

It said that the officers and men have been accused of extra-judicial killings and other human rights violations during a brutal government crackdown on a leftwing youth uprising in the late 1980s.

A Defence Ministry spokesman said he had no information on the story.

Human rights groups have said up to 60,000 people died or disappeared in a crackdown by pro-government death squads on the left-leaning Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (People's Liberation Front) uprising during 1988-90.

Among those sent on leave were two brigadiers who led two army divisions in a major army offensive to capture the northern Tamil Tiger guerrilla stronghold of Jaffna town last December, the newspaper said.

It said most of the other officers were majors, captains and lieutenants serving in the north and east where rebels are fighting for an independent homeland for minority Tamils.

Sri Lankan forces have also been accused of human rights abuses in their campaign against the Tamil separatists. On Monday, a military court of inquiry had found 14 soldiers guilty of massacring 24 Tamil civilians on Feb. 11 in the village of Kumarapuram in eastern Trincomalee district.

Keating reels in opposition before poll

SYDNEY (R) — One of Australia's most influential opinion polls Tuesday showed Prime Minister Paul Keating has dramatically clawed back his conservative opponent's lead four days before a national election.

The morgan poll in the bulletin magazine puts the ruling Australian Labour Party (ALP) within two percentage points of the opposition Liberal-National Party Coalition, after trailing on average by between six to nine points over the last 12 months.

"If the swing continues, the ALP will retain government," the Roy Morgan Research Centre said in a statement.

The opposition, accused of harbouring racists, conceded Tuesday a growing race controversy could cost it votes among the country's big ethnic Asian communities in Saturday's ballot.

As a conservative candidate again made headlines with a comment condemned as racist, the opposition said the race controversy put at risk a year or more of intensive lobbying to mend relations with Australia's ethnic Asian voters.

"I think I would have to answer your question in the affirmative," opposition immigration spokesman Jim Short told Reuters when asked if the racism row threatened to unravel efforts to repair a once-tattered image among Asian communities.

"I would have to say it has been singularly unhelpful and it's made my task and the coalition's task during the election campaign more difficult..." Mr. Short said.

The opposition is seeking to oust Labour, which has traditionally strong ties with ethnic voters, after 13 years in power. But the Morgan poll taken on the weekend found its lead has been cut to two points from 4.5 points in the past week.

It found primary support for the opposition fell three points to 42 per cent from the previous week and support for Labour fell half a point to 40 per cent.

The poll follows a series of remarks by rural-based opposition candidates during the five-week election campaign, including a reference to citizenship ceremonies as "de-wogging ceremonies."



Thousands of opposition activists, many waving black flags, demonstrate at Tongi rail junctions on Tuesday where police shot and killed one of their comrades Monday. They vowed to turn his "blood into a new spirit" in their campaign to drive Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia from power (Reuters photo)

Bangladeshi opposition leaders picked up in police dragnet

DHAKA (R) — Police arrested two key Bangladeshi opposition figures Tuesday in what appeared to be a mounting crackdown against opponents of re-elected Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, relatives and political sources said.

The two arrested senior leaders were Tofayel Ahmad of the main opposition party the Awami League and Abdul Kader Mollah of the Jamaat-E-Islami group.

The arrests came during a crippling "non-cooperation" strike campaign called by opposition groups following elections on Feb. 15. The poll, boycotted by the opposition, was easily won by Mrs. Khaleda's Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP).

"Tofayel was picked up at a hideout this afternoon. He was shown an arrest warrant," his wife told Reuters.

Plainclothes police grabbed Mr. Mollah at his home early Tuesday morning, Jamaat sources said.

Police confirmed the two arrests but declined to comment.

The arrest of Mr. Mollah and Mr. Ahmad follows the arrest Saturday of four other senior opposition figures — two from the Awami League and two from the Jatiya Party.

All six have been arrested under the special powers act which allows any person to be kept in jail for 30 days without trial. They have not been formally charged but police earlier said opposition leaders had been picked up for their role in the anti-Khaleda campaign.

The Awami League, the Jatiya and Jamaat parties are the country's three main opposition groups.

Separately, the two women at the heart of Bangladesh's political crisis have told U.S. Congressman Bill Richardson they want a settlement, but only on their own terms.

Officials said Mr. Richardson, a veteran mediator in world trouble spots, met Mrs. Khaleda and main opposition leader Sheikh Hasina Monday.

Both Mrs. Khaleda and Mrs. Hasina told Mr. Richardson they were desperate for a quick end to the crisis that has badly hurt the poverty-stricken South Asian country's economy.

But both leaders stipulated that a settlement would be "according to their own choice," one official said.

Mr. Richardson, who arrived Sunday, told reporters before leaving Dhaka Monday night: "The only way to resolve the crisis was a dialogue between the rival parties without preconditions."

"A democratic country cannot survive amidst violence," he said referring to fighting between opposition and government supporters that has killed seven people and injured over 300 since Saturday when the "non-cooperation" campaign began.

The latest victim was a policeman, who died in hospital in Chittagong port city Tuesday after being wounded by gunshots during clashes with opposition activists Monday.

Bhutto proposes changes in electoral system

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — The government of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has approved reforms letting Pakistan's minorities have two votes and setting a ceiling on electoral expenses, it was announced here Tuesday.

At a six-hour session of her cabinet overnight, Ms. Bhutto endorsed the recommendations of an electoral reforms committee, which suggested substantial changes in voting procedures.

The committee, comprising the attorney-general, several ministers and secretary of the National Election Commission, recommended granting non-Muslim minorities "dual right" of voting.

Pakistan's Christian, Hindu, Buddhist and Parsi communities have so far been able to cast their vote for reserved seats for minorities.

Under the changes, they will also have the right to cast their votes for general seats, it said.

The minorities are said to be three per cent of Muslim Pakistan's estimated population of 130-million. There has been no census since 1981.

Information Minister Khalid Ahmed Kharal told reporters that the proposed reforms, which require a constitutional amendment, would soon be presented before the National Assembly in the form of a bill.

The changes were agreed despite angry criticism from several leaders of the opposition Pakistan Muslim League (PML), led by former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1974.

الصحف اليومية العربية السياسية المستقلة المنشورة بالإنجليزية من قبل المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية. تأسست 1974.

Chairman of the Board of Directors:

MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General:

MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:

GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:

Jordan Press Foundation.

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Telephone: 6843111, 699634

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 696183

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays. Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

Guide to peace ship

AS EXPECTED and feared, the Hamas suicide attacks in Jerusalem and Ashkelon on Sunday nearly erased much of the lead that Prime Minister Shimon Peres had enjoyed over his rival, Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu. Peres himself has predicted that such attacks would deal a death blow to his election chances as prime minister. "We have all the cards to win these elections, unless there is a terrorist attack," the prime minister was quoted as telling journalists only last week. A snap poll conducted for the Yediot Aharonot newspaper Monday confirmed the obvious when it found that Peres' lead had in fact shrink from 15 per cent to three points in a matter of hours.

The Likud leader has, thus far at least, played his cards well. In the aftermath of the attacks he called for national unity and refrained from fanning anti-government sentiments. Obviously Netanyahu did not wish to appear so cold-blooded as to start capitalising on the backlash against peace even before the blood of the victims dried up. Yet we might as well assume that Peres and his moderate policies, especially with the Palestinians, will come under a new barrage of attacks soon enough.

If former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's recent reaction is a sample of what the Labour Party may expect between now and election day in late May, then the campaign trail of the Likud will be anything but benevolent. Shamir already established a direct link, a cause and effect relationship between the peace deals and acts of terrorism when he said that the Hamas operations "prove once again that the agreements with the PLO are a catastrophe for Israel." This is not only nonsense but a deliberate attempt to twist facts and draw the wrong conclusions.

No sensible person whether Israeli or Arab would see the kind of link that Shamir struck between the peace accords and Sunday's killings. As Peres rightly commented, the attacks by extremists would not disappear if there was no peace with the Palestinians. The exact opposite would be closer to reality. For starters, suicide bombings by Palestinian militants against Israeli civilian targets were a common occurrence before the Oslo accords. Since the time when the PLO assumed control of parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, many attempts to carry out attacks inside Israel were in fact foiled. Moreover, the rate of Palestinian armed operations in Israel has actually fallen since Arafat took control. The suicide bombings were the first of their kind in more than seven months. Of course neither side would be satisfied till violence is eradicated. But to dream of establishing a selective relationship between peace and terrorism is absurd and unfair to say the least.

If the Likud and its leadership aim to capture power in May, it is their right. But they must do this fairly and squarely. Distorting facts, reaching illogical conclusions and playing on false sentiments are not exactly the right way to reach that goal. We hope and trust that the statesmanship displayed by Netanyahu immediately after the attacks would continue to be the guiding light of his electoral campaign. People like Shamir should not be allowed to spread their venom against accommodation because the kind of settlement the Likud sought under his leadership was, is and never will be unattainable.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

There is a big difference between the climate prevailing at the Israeli election campaigns and that which preceded the Palestinian legislative council's elections, according to Salah Jarar, a writer for Al Ra'i daily. In the Palestinian elections campaign, the Palestine authority as well as candidates, political parties and even the opposition groups were totally committed to their drive to achieve peace and declared that they seek a comprehensive settlement that would guarantee the rights of the Palestinians, said the writer. The current Israeli elections campaign is being conducted in an atmosphere marked by hostile acts towards the Arabs, by further confiscations of Arab lands, by continued detention of Palestinians and continued closure of Arab territories, said the writer. He said that while the Palestinian leaders struggle to regain their rights and continue to declare that they are committed to peace, leaders of both Labour and the Likud parties in Israel continue to raise the same slogans which are not only hostile to the Arabs but deny the very essence of peace.

In the view of Mohammad Kawash, a writer for Al Dustour, the peace process has not started yet because Israel has not given up the occupied Arab lands, did not release the Palestinian detainees and is populating the Jewish settlements on the occupied Arab territories. In short, Israel is adamantly refusing to trade total peace for all the Arab lands it has been occupying since 1967, said the writer. Furthermore, the Israeli government, with all its military might and advanced technology, is not able to stop or discover suicidal bombings and is blaming Yasser Arafat instead for the attacks which occur within the occupied Palestinian territory; furthermore, it is threatening the Palestinians with further acts of terrorism and destruction, continued the writer. He said that by murdering Ayash, Israel has opened the door wide for reprisals, ended the truce which had prevailed for seven months and invited counterattacks of violence which are harming the peace process. While expressing regret for the victims, said the writer, one can only expect more attacks and counter attacks as long as Israel continues to adhere to its aggressive policies, perpetuate its occupation of Arab territories and assassinate the Palestinians.

Washington Watch

Republican foreign policy debate — pandering for votes?

By Dr. James Zogby

INDIANA SENATOR Richard Lugar's campaign for the Republican presidential nomination faced difficulties from the outset. The announcement of his candidacy received virtually no press coverage because it was held on April 19, 1995: the day of the terrorist bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City.

His efforts to gain national attention since then have fared no better because an issue on which Mr. Lugar pegged his candidacy — the need for Republicans to present a strong and coherent U.S. foreign policy — has been virtually ignored as a serious issue in this presidential race. Yet the measure of the candidacy is far from the measure of the man.

Mr. Lugar's record of public service is impressive. Before winning election to the U.S. Senate in 1976, he served for eight years as mayor of Indianapolis. Now in his fourth term in the Senate, Mr. Lugar serves as Chairman of the Agriculture Committee and as a member of the Foreign Relations Committee (which he chaired for two years in the mid-1980s). Despite voting this year in support of Senator Dole's controversial bill mandating a move of the U.S. embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, Mr. Lugar has one of the more balanced Middle East records in the Senate.

While Mr. Lugar has been modestly successful in raising funds and securing endorsements, his message that America needs to be engaged in the world because "there is no domestic policy without a national security policy... and there is no economic growth without an international trade policy that promotes exports" and that the post-cold war world "still has dangers that require U.S. leadership and diplomacy" — have not caught hold in this year's political climate. In many ways, Mr. Lugar's inability to attract the spotlight in symptomatic of the strange nature of the 1996 Republican campaign.

Things were not always this way. Since the end of World War II, Republican presidential campaigns traditionally focused heavily on foreign policy. Throughout the cold war, Republicans consistently sought a leader who would defend U.S. security interests and project American values. Republicans frequently fought their battles with Democrats over these issues.

The end of the cold war seems to have left some Republicans in a tail-spin. No longer facing an external threat, this year the candidates have focused their attention on conservative social issues, tax policy and the inane debate over who is the biggest "outsider" — that is, who is the least tied to the political culture of Washington and who, therefore, is the most in contact with the everyday needs of average Americans.

With few exceptions, the Republican candidates have said little that is serious or substantial about foreign policy. Senator Dole, the only Republican with a longer record of public service than Senator Lugar's, has waded into the foreign policy debate on only a few occasions. His record in those forays is a mixture of principle and its absence.

Early in 1995 Mr. Dole published a manifesto on American foreign policy in the prestigious journal Foreign Policy. In this article Mr. Dole attempted to develop a post-cold war internationalist approach to foreign policy that would address the same principles that proved victorious for the U.S. in the cold war.

A severe critic of the Clinton administration's Bosnia policy, Mr. Dole led the Senate effort to end the arms embargo on Bosnia. But he is also a pragmatist; and after the signing of the Dayton accords, despite strong Republican opposition (including some of his rivals for the Republican presidential nomination), Mr. Dole fought hard to win Senate support for Clinton's plan to send U.S. soldiers as part of a NATO peacekeeping force in Bosnia.

While Mr. Dole showed his commitment to principle in the case of Bosnia, his handling of the Middle East peace process can only be characterised as pandering. His infamous

Jerusalem bill, harsh and unbalanced criticism of U.S. assistance to Palestinians and his selection of former U.N. Ambassador Jeanne Kirkpatrick as a key foreign policy advisor have all been designed to win support from the American Jewish community.

The only other Republican candidate to speak about foreign affairs with any regularity has been former CNN commentator Pat Buchanan. And it is Mr. Buchanan's strong articulation of an isolationist and protectionist trade policy that is now forcing the other candidates to respond.

While Mr. Lugar was ignored and the other candidates (including Dole) remained largely silent on foreign policy issues, Mr. Buchanan charged into New Hampshire with his anti-immigration, anti-free trade, anti-intervention and anti-foreign aid message. Playing to a constituency that is suffering from economic anxiety, Mr. Buchanan called for a five year ban on all immigration, an end to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and U.S. participation in the World Trade Organisation, and an end to U.S. involvement in multi-national peacekeeping efforts.

To those fearing a loss of jobs or stagnant wages, Mr. Buchanan had a simple message; the reason "we" are suffering is that we have surrendered American sovereignty to "them" (meaning immigrants, other nations, and the U.N.).

It was only when Mr. Buchanan's poll numbers began to rise that some of his Republican challengers began to respond in opposition to his calls for protectionism and isolation. On one day in New Hampshire, for example, while Mr. Buchanan appeared at a lumber mill that has been losing jobs due to the lower costs of imported lumber allowed in under the NAFTA legislation, Senator Dole countered by appearing at a New Hampshire-based high technology company that has created jobs based on rising exports. Mr. Dole's message was that "We can't build a wall around America and succeed" — a clear reference to Mr.

Buchanan's protectionist rhetoric. Candidates Ralph Alexander and Forbes and former candidate Gramm also joined in this criticism of Mr. Buchanan's trade policy.

But even with this narrow economic debate, there is still no substantive discussion of broader foreign policy issues. A review of the candidates' positions papers reveals very little about their intentions. Once again, with the exceptions of Mr. Dole and Mr. Lugar, the presentations of the other Republicans are limited and at times confusing.

Mr. Alexander, for example, limits his entire foreign policy presentation to 250 words, in which he says the following: "World stability depends upon an active and vigorous U.S. presence." But he then turns immediately to a denunciation of the U.S. presence in Bosnia on the grounds that "we are not the world's policeman."

Mr. Forbes, too, argues that after the cold war the U.S. "must have a presence in Europe and Asia" and that "we can't go back to the isolationism of the 1920s and 1930s." But he, too, argues against the presence of U.S. troops in Bosnia. Texas Senator Phil Gramm also shared this inherently contradictory position.

Before he dropped out of the race, Mr. Buchanan and Mr. Dornan vigorously oppose U.S. participation in Bosnian peacekeeping because U.S. troops were to be under NATO or U.N. command.

Only Mr. Lugar and Mr. Dole have attempted to support President Clinton's backing of the Dayton accords, and only Mr. Lugar has been supportive of the Middle East peace process.

In a speech before the National Jewish Coalition, a Jewish Republican organisation, some of whose leaders have pro-Likud leanings, Mr. Lugar gave credit to the Clinton administration's efforts to provide continuity to the Middle East peace efforts of the Bush administration began in Madrid by then-Secretary of State James Baker. The other Republican candidates (all except Buchanan, who did not attend) who appeared at the same forum made wild

and, to some extent, irresponsibly pandering comments. Mr. Alexander, for example, praised what he called "the importance that Israel plays for the security of the United States" and then went on to berate Syria for not making peace with Israel. The U.S. message to the Syrians, Mr. Alexander said, ought to "end the anti-Israel rhetoric, end the game-playing and end drug trafficking."

Mr. Dole, who still feels that he needs to prove his credentials to the pro-Israel community, went even further than Mr. Alexander. After praising the U.S.-Israel relationship, he made the strange observation that "the entire world has benefited from our relationship." Speaking of the post-cold war challenges of "terrorism, proliferation and radical fundamentalism, Mr. Dole stated "the U.S. should face those challenges with an even closer relationship with Israel."

Mr. Dole further proposed a "full-fledged alliance" — that would consist of a comprehensive and concrete strategic partnership and a "greater integration of U.S.-Israel Middle East defence planning."

It is not uncommon for candidates to pander before a Jewish audience — in fact, the only time that Middle East issues are ever discussed is before Jewish audiences. What is exceptional, however, is that in an election year in which foreign policy is only rarely discussed, the candidates would go to such lengths in their pandering.

This situation is also surprising because in 1992, in the midst of the Madrid peace talks, most candidates — including the Democrats — displayed temperance in their discussion of Middle East issues. In 1996, with only Mr. Lugar responsibly addressing foreign policy issues, it appears that the situation has changed in a negative way. Foreign policy, to these candidates, is not about America responsibly projecting its values and leadership to the world; it is rather a campaign tactic, employed sparingly to inflame sentiments and pander for votes.

The centuries-old tradition of choosing only Italian popes was broken by Karol Wojtyla's election, and is unlikely to be restored. On the contrary, the shift in the balance of membership within the College of Cardinals may tempt the Third Worlders to go even farther afield than Poland, and choose one of their own.

The winning compromise candidate, in the end, may be a doctrinally orthodox Third Worlder called Francis Cardinal Arinze. The 63-year-old Nigerian currently holds the ultra-sensitive job of keeping in touch with his Muslim counterparts "so that we are not stepping on each others' toes" as the two great faiths compete to convert the last great remaining reservoir of animists in the world.

The election in question may not happen for many years, for John Paul II is not yet history. But it is now undeniably on everybody's private agenda. And it would be entirely appropriate that the Catholic Church, with a mostly Third World membership, should at last get a Third World pope.

By Gwynne Dyer

IN THE year 607, the Roman Catholic Church forbade all those who had a vote in the choice of the next pope from discussing the matter during the lifetime of the existing pope, and for three days after his death. On pain of excommunication.

It has been a while, and the threat of hellfire no longer figures prominently in the private cosmology of some of the cardinals who will choose John Paul II's successor. But they keep their doubts to themselves, given the present atmosphere within the church — and none will discuss the succession. The ban still holds.

Nevertheless, the question is getting urgent, for John Paul II is not the man he was. He was blessed with a strong body, but it has had a tough time: a would-be assassin's bullet in 1981, a cancer the size of an orange removed from his colon in 1992, a stainless steel hip-joint after a fall in the shower in 1994.

The Pope is 75, and he now looks every year of his age. On his recent trip to Central America and Venezuela (his 69th major trip abroad since he became Pope in 1978), he was visibly exhausted most of the time, and frequently winced in pain at the slightest exertion.

It will come to us all, should we live so long, but most of us are not part of an apostolic succession. The 265th Pope is, and it is inevitable that as his health fades the speculation mounts: who will be the next pope?

The Catholic Church is even more divided now than when Karol Wojtyla was plucked from Krakow to become pope, for his militant conservatism has rolled back much of the new thinking of Vatican. Many of the estimated billion Catholics in the world are deeply distressed by this, but in Rome the traditionalists are still firmly in control.

This is particularly true of the College of Cardinals, whose votes will choose the next pope. John Paul II has been in office so long that almost three-quarters of its members were appointed by him — and he has usually chosen men in his own intellectual image. They are not going to elect a new John XXIII by accident.

There will be no retreat, in the next papacy, from the trenches that have been dug by John Paul II on issues like the bans on euthanasia, abortion and contraception, or the celibacy of the (exclusively male) priesthood. But there remains a

choice: between someone who holds the reins of dogma and obedience as tightly as the present Pope, and one who would cut Catholics who dissent from the Vatican policy a little slack.

John Paul II, for all his obvious popularity with the crowds, has reduced the church to a barracks-like discipline during his 17 years in office. The closer you get to the Vatican, the more carefully people (including cardinals) choose their words even in private.

"Know the man and his background, and (this) is perfectly in line," explained a senior monk with long Vatican experience. "In Poland you were for Communism or against it. In Poland, to turn out a crowd was to show that you had power. So there you are: his theology — black and white — and his fascination with crowds."

But the crowds and the charisma that enabled him to triumph against those who wanted to preserve a more open and tolerant church will not outlast the man himself. Doctrinally, John Paul II's appointments to the College of Cardinals virtually ensure that the

dogmas he favours will survive him. The harshly unbending style in which he enforced them may not.

The softest of the "papa-bili" (potential papal candidates) is Godfried Cardinal Danneels of Brussels. Interviewed in Rome last year, he spoke about how the church might change: "Too much we are stressing the truth, absolute truth. In future, I would say we should not be so much in the truth as in the mercy. There are exceptions for everything; every human being knows that."

The flexible approach may doom Cardinal Danneels's chances of sitting on St. Peter's throne, for most of the men in the electoral college adhere to the conservative side in what used to be the Catholic debate before John Paul II stiffed it.

But a general feeling that it is time to do some healing in the church probably bars insiders in the present Vatican hierarchy from succeeding the man they have served so zealously. That would blight the candidacy of the Pope's closest henchmen, men like Pio Cardinal Laghi, prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education, and Jozef Cardinal Tomko, the Slovak who heads the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples.

Which leaves whom? One line of plausible speculation begins with the fact that John Paul II has transformed the membership of the College of Cardinals to reflect the shift in the centre of gravity of Catholics in the world. That means fewer Europeans in general, and fewer Italians in particular; but many more Africans, Asians and Latin Americans.

The centuries-old tradition of choosing only Italian popes was broken by Karol Wojtyla's election, and is unlikely to be restored. On the contrary, the shift in the balance of membership within the College of Cardinals may tempt the Third Worlders to go even farther afield than Poland, and choose one of their own.

The winning compromise candidate, in the end, may be a doctrinally orthodox Third Worlder called Francis Cardinal Arinze. The 63-year-old Nigerian currently holds the ultra-sensitive job of keeping in touch with his Muslim counterparts "so that we are not stepping on each others' toes" as the two great faiths compete to convert the last great remaining reservoir of animists in the world.

IT OCCURRED TO ME ...

Potentially fatal attractions

By Ali Kassay

One interesting phenomenon in Amman in the nineties is the return of the street beggar and peddler. Whether you are having a walk, slaving away at your place of work, or resting the weary bones at home, the odds are that your concentration on the task at hand will be interrupted every five minutes by someone who tries to persuade you to bear the burden of his maintenance, or who seeks to sell you a gadget which you neither need nor want, but he argues that you should invest in it anyway because it is cheap.

Recently, however, I had a caller of a different sort. He neither sought anything for himself, nor did he offer me the opportunity of a lifetime. This gentleman proffered a sizeable file full of authentic-looking medical reports to support his case, and asked for a donation for a third party who needed a medical operation. As I read the reports, I noticed the affliction of the stricken party. He needed treatment for a gunshot wound.

"How on earth, in our enlightened and civilised times, did your friend contrive to position himself in the way of an onrushing bullet?" I asked. The answer was simplicity itself. The man just happened to go to a wedding, and the rest took care of itself.

To the uninitiated, the logic of this argument may seem hard to grasp. Learn, then, that Jordanians continue to celebrate weddings by discharging firearms into the air, and, occasionally, onto other wedding guests, despite the best efforts of the Public Security Department to ban the practice. Every year, from Ramtha in the north to Aqaba in the south, gunshots are fired in such quantities that, were they discharged on a battle front, the situation would be classified as a major military engagement.

The result, looking at things from the civic point of view, is invariably a modest, though brutal contribution to the national campaign to control population growth, and grant considerable experience to Jordanian surgeons. However, there is another angle to the matter.

In Jordan, the advent of spring heralds more than clement weather and water shortages. It brings with it that certain magic in the air which permeates all corners of the realm, causing young men and noble women to turn their heads towards each other with added interest. Romance rears its head, and weddings take place at a rate of four or five a day from March till October, making a rough total of more than seven hundred weddings in Amman alone each season. This means over seven hundred wedding gowns and tuxedos, to say nothing of befitting accoutrements for parents and assorted relations, bought and sold at a heady moment in people's lives when they tend to be most open-handed. There is serious money to be made out of this.

An entrepreneur who starts early in the season to sell designer-bullet-proof wedding outfits may capture up to fifteen or twenty per cent of the market before competition keys on to the game and chips in with alternative products. If the enterprise nets only a hundred dinars per garment, simple arithmetic informs us that one would make a neat little packet, in addition, of course, to having performed an important civic duty. Any interested investors, please contact me on this matter care of the Jordan Times.

The next Pope

Oil res Ma

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Reports conflict

(Continued from page 1)

Largely made of President Saddam's extended family, either through blood or marriage, the ruling elite in Baghdad has long been plagued by internal rifts. These have intensified since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and with the crippling U.N. trade sanctions that followed.

The leader of the main Iraqi Shiite opposition movement said a series of armed clashes broke out late Monday in Baghdad, including one near the presidential palace. Other groups denied that.

Ayatollah Mohammad Bakr Al Hakim described the situation in his homeland as "turbulent."

The official Islamic Republic News Agency quoted him as claiming that there were a large number of casualties on both sides in the Tikrit fighting. But he gave no figures.

Officials of the Iraqi National Accord, an opposition group with an office in Amman, said four rocket-propelled grenades were fired at President Saddam's palace in Tikrit's Al Awja district Sunday, apparently by supporters of Hussein Kamel.

Bayan Jabr, a senior official of Al Hakim's faction, said in Damascus, Syria, that he was hearing reports of fighting between members of the Al Majid clan — to which the Kamels belonged — and followers of Uday Hussein, who wields considerable power in Iraq.

A feud between Uday and the Al Majids was cited as one of the main factors that prompted the Kamel brothers to defect Aug. 8.

Mr. Jabr said Wathban Hussein, President Saddam's half-brother and former head of intelligence, was under house arrest in Baghdad after Qusai Hussein stormed his home to foil a planned defection to the Kurdish self-rule enclave in northern Iraq.

Wathban, long one of Uday's chief protagonists, was shot and seriously wounded by Uday in a fire-fight outside Baghdad last August, according to Arab intelligence sources.

But the defection of the Kamels, and the need for the regime to close ranks, brought a temporary halt to that feud.

Apart from the reports of executions and fighting, rumours are circulating among Iraqis living abroad, with the opposition denying them.

On said Saddam Hussein was killed by a bodyguard close to the defectors or in fighting at his presidential palace. Another said Uday and President Saddam's third son-in-law, Jamal Mustapha Al Takriti, were wounded in Friday's attack on the Kamel brothers.

There were also rumours that Hussein Kamel's uncle and former defence minister, General Ali Hassan Al Majid, cut off the head of his dead nephew to prove his loyalty to President Saddam.

"These are just rumours, but these events have become possible. Saddam's death could occur at any moment," said Iraqi businessman Hesham Jubari said, adding that the president's entourage included many relatives of the murdered defector.

Oil talks resume March 11

(Continued from page 1)

arrangements with the United States during his meeting at the White House on the fifth anniversary of the ceasefire that ended the 1991 Gulf war.

But the fate of the 550 Kuwaitis missing since Iraqi troops invaded the emirate "is the top of our priority," Kuwait Information Minister Sheikh Saud Nasir Al Sabah told a Washington news conference Tuesday.

"There is no doubt that his highness the emir will discuss this with the president," Sheikh Saud said.

An Iraqi official said meanwhile more than half a million Iraqis who are chronically ill cannot obtain enough medicine because of the sanctions.

"The distribution of medicine to 600,000 Iraqis who have medical cards depends on imports and the quantities of products delivered, which prevents patients sometime from obtaining them," the official told state television on Monday.

Port project angers Lebanese archaeologists

By Zeina Soufan
Reuters



A truck loaded with rocks moves across ancient ruins to reach the shore where a new modern fishing port is under construction and Enfe (Reuters photo)

(\$220,000) contract. Director-General of the Ministry of Transportation Imad Nawwam said.

On September 28, the DGA made an official request to the chief pro-

sector of north Lebanon for "the immediate freeze of work at Enfe" but it was never answered.

"Instead, a gentlemen's agreement was struck between the minister of

transportation and the minister of culture that works shall not endanger the archaeological remains," a DGA official said.

But archaeologists say the site has already been

defaced and its natural beauty distorted.

"It's a fait accompli. We are trying to minimise the damage now," the DGA official said.

Enfe has four ancient

churches, including the chapel of Saydet El Rih which has fragments of Byzantine murals.

The church was built by the lords of Nephin (Enfe) when it was a fief of the

crusader county of Tripoli in the 12th century.

The town apparently served thousands of years earlier as a Phoenician port, as evidenced by a number of Phoenician slipways still remaining.

A few metres from the shore, Roman vats for olive oil and wine production are carved in the rock, linked by underground channels.

A 98 metre-long moat separates the peninsula and the remains of the 800-years-old, three-storey castle from the shore and the present-day village of Enfe.

Memoirs of 12th century travellers recorded that the castle had 11 towers. Today, only one tower can be identified.

Some 20 construction trucks thunder through the moat about 100 times a day beside the castle walls to dump loads of rock into the sea to build the quay.

Quotably said vibrations from the trucks could affect some large rocks beside the moat believed to have been part of a Roman castle or watchtower.

On Feb. 7, the Lebanese government approved the establishment of an industrial zone in the village of Enfe which stands hundreds of metres from the site.

"This is a positive step which will keep all factories away from the archaeological site. Now we know for sure we won't end up with a canned sea-food factory next to the fishing port on the site," the DGA official said.

Policy

(Continued from page 1)

Some prisoners, he said, were released earlier on individual basis as some information shows. They were not handed officially to the Jordanian government and thus "we have requested them (the Israelis) to make a final count of the number of prisoners and we expect to receive final information in the coming few days."

According to Dr. Muasher, most of the prisoners are charged with infiltrating into Israel or participating in armed acts against civilians or military targets. A few of them are charged with crimes as forgery or theft, he said.

In response to a question on the number of Jordanians held in Iraq, Kuwait and other jails, the minister said Jordan was continuing its efforts to ensure the release of all Jordanian prisoners in all countries of the world.

In reply to another question about the situation in Iraq, he said reports showed that "accounts are still settled in bloody methods, but I do not want to go into details before verifying information."

Dr. Muasher said there was still no immediate, organised effort to stop what was happening in Iraq, stressing that Jordan cannot rely on information by the media.

"Not even those saying that Iraq might carry out some actions that might undermine security in Jordan."

He denied that a tripartite summit to be attended by His Majesty King Hussein, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat had been postponed and said no date has been set for it yet.

He told reporters the summit will be preceded by Jordanian-Palestinian meetings to discuss regional projects related to Jordan and the Palestinian self-rule areas.

The minister said Jordan agreed to host Iraqi opposition groups because "their goals are political and not military," stressing that Jordan had nothing to do with the role of these offices or their plans to topple Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

"This is a purely internal Iraqi affair," he emphasised. He said he cannot deny nor confirm news saying Iraqi Deputy Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz was arrested because the government was not sure of their credibility.

In reply to a question on whether the Jordanian ambassador in Baghdad was harassed by the authorities, he said Jordan will not allow harassment of any member of the staff at the embassy in the Iraqi capital.

Danes in post-cold war ancient Greek Black Sea dig

By Christopher Follett
Reuters

COPENHAGEN — Danish archaeologists have launched their first big project in former Soviet territory, excavating an ancient Greek outpost in Crimea as a new era of post-cold war cooperation gets under way.

"The collapse of the Soviet Union and Russia's subsequent opening to the West has brought with it exciting new possibilities for cooperation between archaeologists," Lise Hannestad said.

Panskoye, on a cove on the northwestern coast of Crimea, was one of a string of Greek coastal colonies encircling the Black Sea in ancient times.

It was set up around 400 B.C. as a sub-colony of nearby Olbia, one of the biggest ancient Greek cities in the northern Black Sea, originally settled by Ionians from the Asia Minor city of Miletus.

Later the settlement was

expected to run over four summer digging seasons.

"For generations we have only been able to conduct a very limited exchange of data (with the Russians) and actual cooperation in archaeological and research projects has been minimal," Ms. Hannestad said.

"To work in the current political situation in Crimea, where most inhabitants are Russians living in what is now Ukraine, calls for a diplomatic approach," she added.

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Later the settlement was

conquered by the nearby Dorian city of Chersonesos — today's Sevastopol — before it finally succumbed to attacks by nomadic Scythians from the steppes in the middle of the third century B.C.

"We chose the site because of its interesting building archaeology. There are traces of fortification but no walls. Panskoye was really a large ancient Greek village and there are not many of them extant in the area," Ms. Hannestad said.

"Russian archaeologists had previously excavated two large building complexes and a number of burial grounds on the site but they had to give up their digs in the late 1980s due to lack of funds," she added.

Apart from traces of a fort with four round towers at Panskoye, the Russian-Danish team has unearthed a fortified two-storey building complex, with apart-

ment rooms, dining hall, workshops, stores and a shrine to Greek warrior hero heracles.

A wealth of artefacts have been found, including terracotta figurines and reliefs, oil and wine jars, red figured pottery and polished and black-glaze glassware from Athens.

Of special note are a pot and a drinking bowl bearing Greek inscriptions naming both Olbia and the mysterious ancient Greek agricultural fertility God Sabazios.

The Greek Black Sea colonies were heavily dependent on farming. Settlements like Panskoye were the breadbasket of Olbia and Chersonesos, with extensive fishing and a rich agriculture based on the production of wheat, beans, lentils and wine.

They were often centres of trade with non-Greek peoples, notably the Scythians, who supplied grain from Ukraine to local

Greek merchants for domestic use and export to the Greek homeland, including the Aegean islands.

Greek merchants in the colonies exchanged luxury goods for grain to ship back to cities in Greece and Panskoye's burial ground revealed rich finds such as jewellery, weapons, glass and perfume containers, reflecting this lucrative trade.

Coin finds and signs of conflict and fire confirm that Olbia lost Panskoye to Chersonesos during the latter's expansion up the west coast of Crimea in the mid-fourth century B.C.

Panskoye was partially rebuilt, complete with several new fortified buildings but the village was finally destroyed by the Scythians around 260 B.C. as indicated by extensive finds of war materials, including arrowheads and catapult stones.

The Scythians set fire to

the fortified building and many of the inhabitants failed to escape, including a woman and child whose skeletons were found in a deep well on the site.

"Coexistence with the nomadic Scythians must have been extremely difficult throughout Panskoye's history with major conflicts of interest, hence the need to fortify the village," Ms. Hannestad said.

She said Panskoye was a classic example of the conflict between a nomadic people and a resident farmer population.

"The two cultures did intermingle, the two peoples worked with each other, there was intermarriage and Greek products were popular with the Scythians," she said.

"But when there was no longer any need for peaceful coexistence, the Scythians destroyed the place, leaving it in ruins," Ms. Hannestad said.

PNA rounds up activists

(Continued from page 1)

vered he might have had links to the militant Islamic Jihad group.

Israeli commentators had pointed to the quick gunning down of Hamideh as an example of public jitters following Sunday's bombings.

Internal Security Minister Moshe Shahal said it now looked as if the driver had intentionally slammed his rented car into the crowd.

"It's not final but I have the latest assessment from the checks done by police. The tendency is to see yesterday's incident as an attack," Mr. Shahal told Israel Radio.

"And that is based on information in the hands of the police concerning the man himself, things he said, his background and technical checks of the route the car took," he said.

An Israeli army document has recommended slapping tough sanctions on the Palestinians, including cutting off water, electricity and medical services, if Yasser Arafat fails to crack down on anti-Israeli extremists, officials said.

A senior army officer who spoke on condition of anonymity said the recommendations were included in a six-page report drawn up two months ago at the request of General Ilan Biran, commander of the central region which includes the West Bank.

The report, titled "Violations of agreements with the Palestinians and possible sanctions" and written by an officer identified only as Colonel S said that the sanctions could range from tightening the closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip up to "if necessary, cutting off water, electricity and telephone services" to Palestinian areas.

"If the Palestinian Authority doesn't handover terrorists to Israel and fight effectively against terrorism," the report said, Israel should also bar access for Palestinians to Israeli health care facilities and halt supplies of medicine to Palestinian hospitals.

Israel radio said Gen. Biran repeatedly pressed his superiors to implement the report's recommendations but was firmly rebuffed by the foreign ministry and Gen. Oren Shahor, coordinator of Israeli activities in the territories.

The senior officer played down the importance of the report, saying: "There are dozens of documents expressing the views of different army officers and they in no way represent official policy."

But Ahmad Tibi, an Israeli and close advisor to Mr. Arafat, was quoted on the radio Tuesday as calling for the immediate dismissal of the report's author.

Revelation of the report coincided with a top level Israeli effort to force Mr. Arafat to take firmer action against extremists following the twin suicide bombing on Sunday.

Mr. Arafat was due to hold an unprecedented meeting Tuesday evening with Israeli army chief Amnon Shahak, who is to present a detailed list of actions the Jewish state is demanding to halt anti-Israeli attacks, Israeli officials said.

Following Sunday's bombings, Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres demanded that Mr. Arafat dismantle the guerrilla networks or risk undermining the future of the peace process.

Palestinian police began rounding up Hamas militants and members of Islamic Jihad almost immediately on Sunday and by Tuesday evening had detained more than 120, sources in the two movements said.

The sweep began in Gaza City but spread late Monday and Tuesday to the West Bank where nearly 70 Hamas members were arrested.

But the arrests did not include senior Hamas leaders and an Israeli military official told AFP that the list of demands to be presented by Gen. Shahak Tuesday night would include 12 top militants that Israel wants turned over.

The 12 include Mohammad Deif, the commander of Hamas' armed wing Izzeddin

Al Qassam, and his number two Abdul Fattah Surti, the official said.

Gen. Shahak was also to insist that Mr. Arafat strike at the Hamas and Islamic Jihad infrastructure, providing a strict timetable for the dismantling and arrest of hundreds of Al Qassam members and the destruction of weapons and explosives stocks, officials said.

"We're very serious, and the fact that we're sending General Shahak in person with the list of Israeli de-

mands proves it," a senior Israeli official told AFP on condition of anonymity.

"This time we are more determined than ever to convince Yasser Arafat to act against Hamas," he said.

But Mr. Arafat was also under pressure from Hamas, the main Palestinian opposition movement, not to succumb to the Israeli pressure.

Mr. Arafat has been seeking a reconciliation with the movement which still enjoys wide support among Palesti-

nians, in large part due to a broad network of social aid activities.

Several Hamas figures were elected as independents in January to the new Palestinian legislative council.

The movement issued a leaflet Tuesday branding the Israeli demands for a crackdown "a cheap and blatant attempt at blackmail."

"We implore the Palestinian Authority and members of the elected parliament to stand against the Zionist blackmail," it said.

U.N. deplors Cuba downing

(Continued from page 1)

by U.S. authorities.

"It is the peace, the sovereignty, the territorial integrity and the security of Cuba (that) has been endangered for more than 35 years," he said.

The United States sought to lay a legal foundation for any future sanctions it might want the United Nations to impose against Cuba, according to one U.S. official. But its chances are slim, with few countries willing to encourage Washington to slap any more sanctions on Cuba.

U.S. President Bill Clinton announced a series of actions Monday designed to retaliate for the incident Saturday.

Mr. Clinton halted all charter flights between the United States and Cuba and added new restrictions to Cuban diplomats' travel.

He pledged support for legislation toughening the embargo against Cuba and said he would ask Congress to compensate the victims' families out of \$100 million in frozen Cuban assets.

Mr. Clinton called the attack "an appalling reminder of the nature of the Cuban regime: repressive, violent, scornful of international law," and said he was "not ruling out any further steps in the future should they be required."

Several members of Congress and Cuban American activists demanded more punitive measures, starting with final action of a tough bill — bottled up in a House-Senate conference committee — that would dramatically expand sanctions on Havana.

'Egyptians' rights are violated

(Continued from page 12)

A statistical study included in the report prepared by Egyptian professor Nader Fargani said 27 per cent of immigrant workers believe they are discriminated against compared to nationals "who work less and earn more."

It said 58 per cent of the immigrants "have no work contract and only 15 per cent were unable to bring their families with them due to strict regulations imposed by the host countries."

There are 900,000 Egyptians working under the sponsorship system used in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

Arab Gulf states and EU resume dialogue tomorrow amid improving ties

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab Gulf states and their main economic partner the European Union (EU) will reopen their long-standing dialogue this week amid reports of improvement in their relations that were strained by EU plans to impose additional oil taxes, the official media reported Tuesday.

Senior officials from the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the EU will meet in Brussels Thursday to pave the way for talks by their foreign ministers on April 22, the official Emirates news agency WAM said.

As Gulf delegates began flying to Brussels, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) semi-official daily Al Itihad said the EU was about to announce it was officially abandoning plans to introduce carbon taxes.

The paper said it had obtained an official EU document stating that the group's 15 members would shelve the project and give each of them the freedom to individually take the appropriate measures to protect the environment.

"The document includes an official EU position which buries the carbon tax project... This will bolster relations between the two sides and help push forward the economic negotiations between them," it said.

GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait and the UAE — were angered by EU plans to impose a tax of up to \$10 on every imported barrel of oil as a measure to curb the emission of carbon dioxide, which is widely blamed for global warming.

The six members have rebuffed argument that such a tax, which was supposed to be enforced in 1993, was designed to protect the environment, saying it is designed to seek additional revenues to tackle budget deficits.

Gulf states and other oil producers were worried because the tax would hamper growth in demand for crude, which they say is already heavily taxed in the EU and other major industrial countries.

GCC representative at the Brussels-based EU, Mushtaq Saleh, said last week the 15-

year-old Gulf alliance and the EU were on the verge of reaching agreement on the oil tax, adding this would help their trade talks.

WAM said Thursday's meeting would cover political issues and economic and trade cooperation and would bring together senior foreign ministry officials.

"The meeting is part of a dialogue, which is aimed at strengthening relations between the two sides," it said.

GCC countries, which control around 45 per cent of the world's proven crude reserves, have been locked in negotiations with the EU over the past eight years for a free trade agreement that could help them obtain technology and give them free access to their lucrative European petrochemical market.

Heavy EU taxes on imports of Gulf petrochemicals and other products have combined with a decline in oil prices to upset their trade balance.

From a surplus of nearly \$30 billion, the GCC is now suffering a deficit of more than \$10 billion in its trade

with the EU.

"The trade balance could improve if the EU removes barriers for our exports on a reciprocal basis," a Gulf economy official told AFP.

Economists said the proposed free trade pact could become within reach if GCC countries unified their widely-varied customs tariffs and the remaining members — Saudi Arabia and Oman — joined the World Trade Organisation.

Unification of customs, part of GCC plans to create a common market, has been demanded by the EU as a pre-requisite for any trade agreement, which will also facilitate the transfer of industrial capital to Gulf states and support attempts to diversify their oil-reliant economies.

Trade between the GCC and the EU stood at around \$35 billion in 1994, including nearly \$23 billion worth of EU exports. Around one third of the GCC's oil production is supplied to the EU, making it the biggest importer of Gulf crude in the world.

Israeli economy seen weathering West Bank, Gaza ban

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's finance minister said Tuesday the closure of the West Bank and Gaza after two suicide bombings would have little impact on the Israeli economy despite the absence of almost 60,000 Palestinian workers.

Abraham Shohat based his assessment on the presence in the Jewish state of tens of thousands of foreign workers from countries like Romania, Thailand and China, who can pick up the slack.

"There will be some harm but it will be much less dramatic than when we didn't have all these foreign workers in Israel," Mr. Shohat told Israeli Army Radio.

He said earlier closures, in the wake of a wave of suicide bombings following the 1993 Israel-PLO peace deal, had "a great impact" on the country's economy.

"Today the Israeli economy is more flexible," Mr. Shohat said.

Israel Sunday sealed off the West Bank and Gaza Strip indefinitely following two bombings that killed 24 people on a Jerusalem bus and one woman at an army hitchhiking post in Ashkelon.

Closures are normal Israeli practice following such attacks and have proved devastating for Palestinians who depend on jobs in Israel to feed their families.

But in the past two years Israel's construction and agricultural sectors, the main employers of Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza, have increasingly looked towards foreign countries for cheap labour.

"The impact of the closure will be minimal because of a decreasing dependence on workers from the territories

as more foreign workers have entered the market," said Jonathan Katz, senior economist at Capital Holdings Consultants.

According to the labour ministry, 59,000 Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza work in Israel including 12,000 in agriculture and 36,000 in construction.

This is about half the 115,000 Palestinians who worked in Israel in 1992. Foreign workers in Israel number 73,000 out of a total labour force of two million. In addition, the interior ministry estimates that about 100,000 foreigners work in Israel illegally.

The agriculture ministry said it would request licences for 4,000 more foreigners if the closure continues for a long time.

But David Brodett, director general of the finance

ministry, said he did not think Israel would prolong the closure because of its impact on the Palestinian economy.

He said however that in the long term, Israel's industry must seek alternatives to bringing in more foreigners.

"The matter has to be dealt with. This includes making technological changes to replace workers," Mr. Brodett told Israeli Radio.

Besides labour, Israel also imports fruit and vegetables from the Palestinian self-ruled areas. This competition for local produce helped reduce inflation in 1995.

A spokesman for the agriculture ministry said imports of vegetables from Gaza have been halted for a few days because of the possibility that explosives could be hidden in the cargo. But he said activity would resume in a few days.

EU, Morocco sign landmark trade deals

BRUSSELS (R) — Morocco and the European Union (EU), marking what they called a milestone on the road to regional stability, formally signed two key accords covering trade and cooperation and fishing Monday.

The accords, initiated in November after months of wrangling over issues such as canned sardines, cut flowers, tomatoes and EU access to Moroccan fishing grounds, were signed by Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli for the EU and Moroccan Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Abdul Latif Filali.

"This is a milestone in the creation of an economic area covering the whole of the Euro-Mediterranean region and making it a zone of peace and stability," Mr. Agnelli told reporters at the signing ceremony.

The trade and cooperation accord is one of a series of similar deals the EU is piecing together with non-EU Mediterranean nations as part of its Euro-Med policy to create a free trade zone over the next 15 years.

"We are turning a page in our relations with the European Union," Mr. Filali said.

"We are now setting our relations with Europe in a framework of solidarity, reciprocity and co-development."

"This is the most important agreement ever signed by the Kingdom of Morocco... it expresses our clear wish to be closely attached to Europe," he added.

Mr. Filali called on the EU to open permanent channels of communication between Brussels and Rabat to push forward the political, social and economic aspects of the accords.

"A vast amount is at stake in this world of cut-throat competition," he said.

The EU already has similar deals with Tunisia and Israel, is actively negotiating with Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt, and has received a request from Syria for negotiations to begin as soon as possible.

The aim, as declared at last November's 17-nation Euro-Med meeting in the Spanish city of Barcelona, is to use the multiple levers of diplomacy, politics and economic to shore up the EU's southern flank.

A decade after Marcos, Philippine economy is still on reform path

MANILA (AFP) — The overthrow of dictator Ferdinand Marcos 10 years ago did not just restore Philippine democracy, it signalled the start of a radical economic transformation here.

Corazon Aquino who was elected president after Marcos left the Philippines, and her successor, Fidel Ramos, shored up to create an export-oriented, liberalised, foreign investment-friendly economy out of one that had been protectionist, highly controlled and inward looking.

But their efforts to help a country left destitute by Marcos catch up with Asia's economic tigers have run into numerous obstacles, many of which were created by the same forces that unleashed the popular 1986 revolt that toppled Marcos.

Communist guerrillas, rightist military coup plotters, affected businessmen, nationalist congressmen, leftist pressure groups, interventionist courts and even the influential Roman Catholic church hierarchy have slowed moves to open up the economy and shrink deficits.

While Mrs. Aquino and Mr. Ramos insisted that development and democracy go hand in hand, both administrations

engaged in a protracted struggle with congress, the courts and street protesters, to get their measures implemented.

"The process of getting reforms is more difficult because the public's understanding of economics is poor," says economist Mahar Mangahas, head of Social Weather Stations (SWS), an independent research group.

Mr. Ramos has seen his popularity ratings fall to new lows in recent months as opposition groups of all stripes assail him for the imposition of an unpopular 10 per cent value-added tax and a hike in state-controlled oil prices.

Arguments from most economists and business leaders that these measures are necessary for growth have gone unheeded by placard-waving rallyists and grandstanding politicians.

Mr. Ramos has also committed to tax reforms affecting the powerful tobacco and liquor industries, the deregulation of the oil industry, the opening of the retail trade to foreigners and lowering of tariffs — all issues which are increasingly controversial.

Local experts fear Mr. Ramos may back down be-

fore the clamour.

"Ramos has to do the right thing, not the popular thing," former budget secretary Benjamin Diokno warns.

Political scientist Felipe Miranda, another SWS official, says their surveys found that Filipinos are "quite hung up on government protecting them, securing them against what would be the tendencies of business" — not a good omen for a government opening up to market forces.

The post-Marcos years have seen numerous victories — the sugar, coconut, shipping, insurance, telecom, mining and banking industries have been liberalised, and restrictions on foreign-exchange trading, imports and most foreign investments have been loosened if not totally abolished.

A continuing privatisation programme begun in 1986 has raised \$6.5 billion through the sale of various state firms and assets.

The economy responded by surging from 1987 to 1989, only to contract from 1990 to 1992 due to rightist coup attempts, a series of natural disasters and a power shortage.

Since Mr. Ramos was

elected in 1992, growth has resumed with the gross national product rising by 5.3 and 5.7 per cent in 1994 and 1995 respectively.

Foreign investments, exports and tourist arrivals have been rising though still not on the level of nearby Malaysia or Thailand.

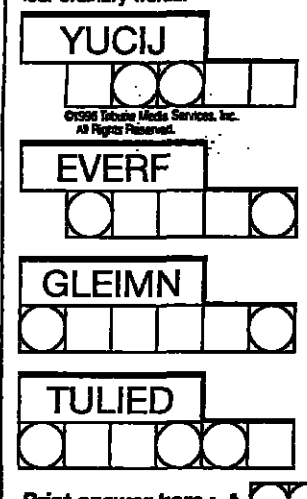
Peter Wallace, head of the local office of the Economist Intelligence Unit, says that foreign investors' main concerns during the Aquino regime — political stability and a reliable power supply — appear to have been solved. The major constraints remaining are the lack of infrastructure, he says, but notes that for once, government is committed to providing this.

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen.



JUMBLE.

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

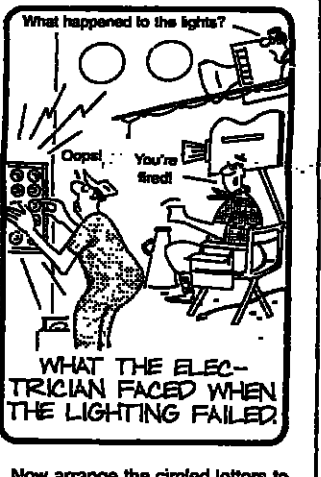


Print answer here: A

Yesterday's Jumbles: FABLE WEIGH STANZA SUGDUE
Answer: What they considered the merger of the candy companies — A SWEET DEAL

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argillon



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1996

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Find out what your family desires and help them to gain their goals. Later, do whatever will improve your own talents.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Get into career activities early today and make real progress during the daytime hours. Be happy at home this evening.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Study new outlets which can be more lucrative, and then go to the right sources for the information you need on a new project.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Get up early and improve your appearance for you to be prosperous in your career. Study your practical goals and how to achieve them.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Study into that new plan which help you to gain your aims more quickly and easily and then discuss it with higher-ups.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Be more inventive in going after your aims and they are more easily attained. Take it easy tonight with your mate and loved ones.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Contact someone who can give you their support, and later tonight join them in some social outlet. State your ambitions clearly.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You can understand at this time how to get ahead faster through new activities and outlets. You will gain prestige this evening.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Try to appreciate your mate's best qualities today and then later this evening you can handle your best interest more efficiently.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Get ideas operating which will improve your public image towards being successful. The evening later today can be fun with your loved one.

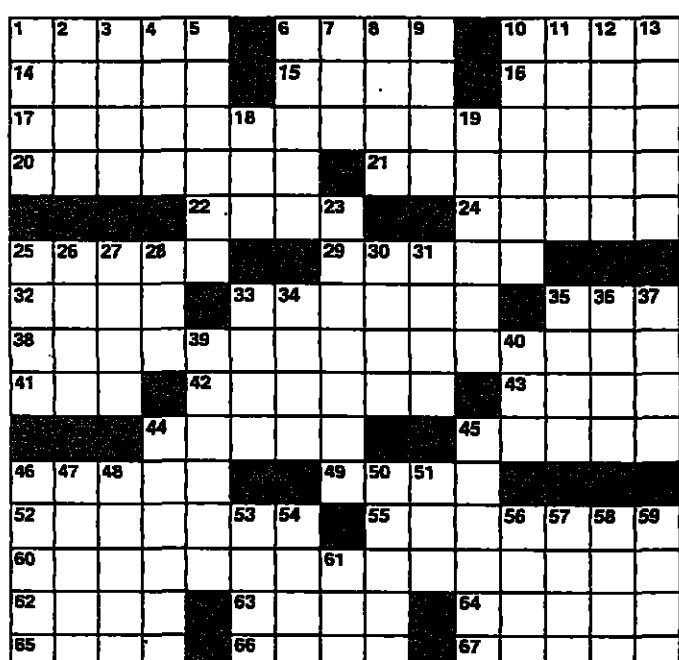
AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Study information which can help you to improve routines in the morning today, and later this evening get your outside contacts improved.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Plan time today to have fun during spare moments. Take your mate out to a new, charming place and add some spark to your romance.

Birthstone of February: Amethyst — Onyx

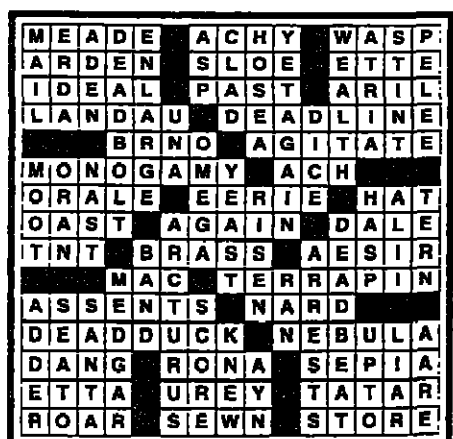
THE Daily Crossword by Don Johnson

- ACROSS
- Older but —
 - Buddies
 - Toodle-oo
 - Talus
 - "— ben Adhem"
 - Time periods
 - Hustles
 - Shore
 - Late comic, Jimmy
 - Knowledge handed down
 - Musical group
 - Solitary
 - Not a soul
 - Actress Anderson
 - Clothing
 - Condiment
 - Controls
 - Filthy abode
 - Expiates
 - Senator Bob
 - Commences
 - Shaded leafy recess
 - Precipitous
 - Robert —
 - Godness of love
 - Kind of team
 - On the — (having poor choices)
 - "When I was —"
 - Raison d' —
 - Mountain nymph
 - Enrbes
 - Fast planes
 - Things lacking



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Yesterday's puzzle solved

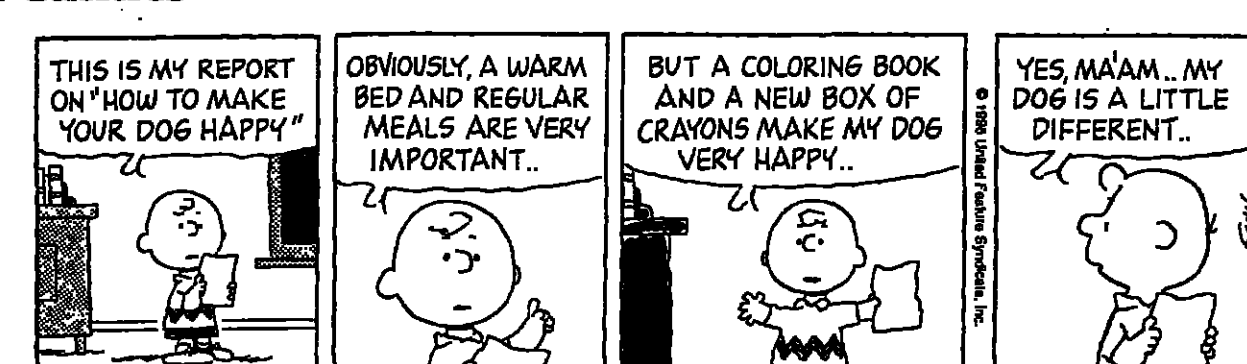


- DOWN
- Rolls of bills
 - Concerning
 - Jaeger's cousin
 - Graceful trees
 - Spring back
 - Flag
 - Low grade wool
 - Showy
 - West African
 - Bridge combination
 - "— we all?"
 - Sample
 - Property

- Japanese vegetable
- Mangle
- Agreement
- Swiss mountains
- Blockhead
- Mere
- Nothing
- Seine feeder
- Food scraps
- boy!
- Explorer
- Heyerdahl
- Singer Hank
- Leer
- River in Belgium
- Brown butterflies
- Wedding vow
- Positions
- Literature
- Nobelist
- Sounds of laughter

- Italian commune
- Belt
- Burdens
- Actor Wallace
- the line (obeys)
- Salamanders
- Plant fossils
- Govi. agis.
- Amo, aras, —
- Units of energy
- Linkletter or Garkunkel

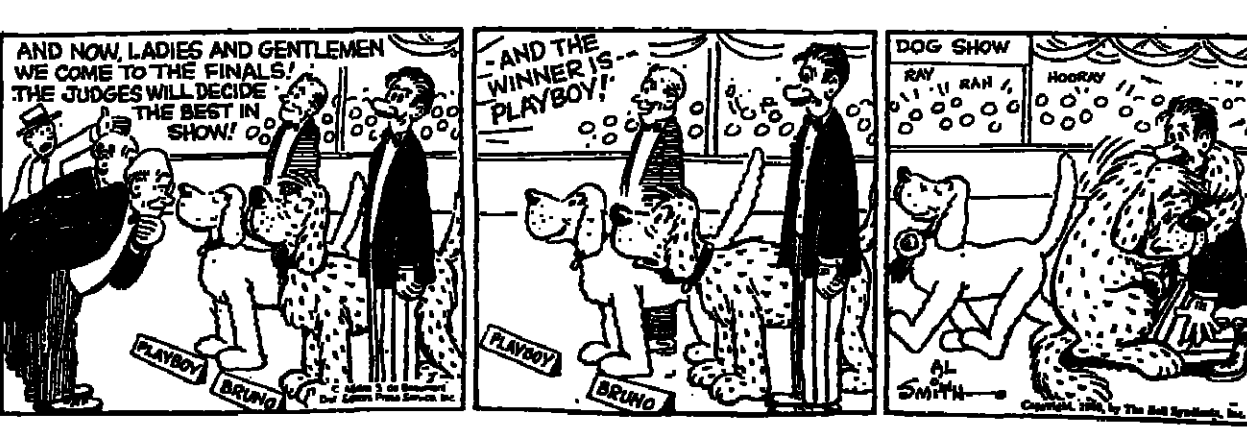
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n' Jeff



Jordan trade delegation begins U.S. visit

By George S. Hishmeh
USIA Staff Writer

WASHINGTON — A Jordanian trade delegation Monday began a week-long visit to the United States in the hope, according to a spokesman, of finding "a marriage between U.S. technical know-how and managerial skills and the low-cost manufacturing base in Jordan."

The spokesman, Fawaz Shaalan, said his Jordan Trade Association group would spend two days in Washington and then fly to Chicago for one-on-one meetings with representatives of American businesses to discuss potential joint ventures and licensing, purchasing and distribution agreements.

Speaking at a luncheon hosted by Jordan's ambassador in Washington, Fawaz Shaalan, the leader of the delegation of 11 Jordanian businessmen, emphasized that his country now serves as the "gateway" to the emerging Middle East which he underlined has a market of 130 million persons.

"Tracking distance from Amman to Tel Aviv," he continued "is only five

hours." It takes the same time to travel from Amman to Damascus or Beirut, he added, and one can reach Cairo in less than 24 hours. In other words, he repeated, "in one day's driving you can reach a market of 120 million people."

Mr. Shaalan added: "We know the U.S. possesses great technical know-how and great expertise in the areas of management and marketing. We feel that in Jordan, we have a pretty good manufacturing base. I believe that a marriage of those two comparative advantages can be very beneficial and would create a success that would allow us to service the new emerging Middle East."

The Jordanian business delegation, which includes two women, represents among others para-pharmaceutical firms, agrochemical producers, and retailers of bedouin handicrafts, and is seeking developers for a new plant for detergents and household products, U.S. distributors of natural Dead Sea products, manufacturers of entertainment machinery, light bulbs, alkaline batteries, dried baby foods, cereals and organic

fertilizer.

This is the first Jordanian business delegation to visit the United States in the wake of the Amman Economic Summit conference last October, which emphasized the partnership between the public and private sectors in the Middle East. Although none of the American companies that the delegation is scheduled to meet here and in Chicago were in Amman last year, Mr. Shaalan emphasized that their trip here was part of the "general effort" to project Jordan's economic liberalisation programme which has strengthened the private sector.

In the past year, Jordan has enacted several new laws to emphasise the business-friendly environment in the country, particularly after the Jordan-Israel peace treaty signed last October.

This sentiment was echoed by Ambassador Tarawneh who expressed hope that through the ongoing peace process the Jordan Rift Valley, which, he pointed out, had in the past served as a dividing line between adversaries, would in the future be the "valley of peace bearing the fruits of peace."



Cray Research Chairman Phillip Samper (left) and Silicon Graphics chief executive officer Edward McCracken (right) shake hands after a deal. The workstation maker agreed to acquire the struggling supercomputer manufacturer Monday press conference where the two companies agreed to merge in a \$752 million cash and stock deal (Reuters photo)

U.N.: Money laundering is stalling world's war on drugs

VIENNA (AFP) — The world-wide war against drug trafficking and abuse is being stymied by a lack of powerful legal weapons to combat money laundering, the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) says.

In its annual report Wednesday, the Vienna-based U.N. agency called for a "general mobilisation" to combat a problem so great that it puts financial markets at risk and poses a "real threat" to democracy.

"No country, rich or poor, large or small, equipped with sophisticated machinery to fight money-laundering or not, can consider itself safe from money-laundering activities," it said.

No one knows exactly how much dirty money is being "cleaned" through international currency transfers, multiple financial transactions, seemingly legitimate investments and other means.

But estimates suggest the figure runs to "several hundred billion dollars a year," exceeding the gross national product of most countries.

The sums are so great that "they are capable of tainting

and destabilising financial markets, endangering the economic, political and social foundations of economically weak states — especially states that have just developed market economies — and ultimately posing a real threat to democracy."

Seizing drugs, "even in large quantities," has little impact on drug traffickers because they can make up their losses with bigger shipments, the agency said.

The better way is to confiscate the assets and property of criminals, thus undermining their ability to organise and maintain their operations "as well as their ability to corrupt."

"It is often the only way to destroy criminal organisations and the kinds of trafficking operations they develop," it said.

Many nations have taken steps against money laundering, but notably absent among them are Russia and other former Soviet republics, where no laws yet exist to fight the problem," it said.

Casting its eye over the globe in its 70-page report, the INCB reported a rise in

drug problems almost everywhere.

Europe: The greatest concern is in the eastern half, especially in the former Soviet Union, where the drug problem is entwined with an overall rise in crime — and no ex-communist state has enacted a comprehensive drug law.

In the Commonwealth of Independent States, it said, local-level crackdowns have had a limited effect, the justice system is slow and corruption among officials is rife.

Drug trafficking has thus grown into a network that takes in ex-Soviet nationals who are now living in Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary and Poland.

There has meanwhile been a considerable rise in cocaine seizures in Europe, where the east is being used as a conduit for South American cartels supplying the Western European market.

Asia: Money laundering is a growing problem, the board said. Many financial transactions are being done in China — a major conduit for South East Asian heroin — through informal channels, making enforcement that much harder.

South East Asia remains one of the world's biggest heroin producing areas, with large quantities being consumed in the region as well as being exported abroad.

India, Nepal and Sri Lanka are increasingly being used as transit points for Europe-bound heroin from both Southeast and Southwest Asia.

The Americas: Peru and Bolivia remain the leading sources of coca which, in Colombia, is refined into cocaine.

In the United States, a new aspect of the drug problem is the illegal manufacture, trafficking and abuse of methamphetamine, as well as the abuse of hallucinogens such as LSD and consumed at all-night "rave" parties.

BUSINESS

A review of news from the Arabic press

Saket sees Palestinian market most important for Jordan in the future

★ THE PALESTINIAN market is Jordan's most important market in the future due to its proximity and the unique ties between the two people, Bassam Al Saket, president of the Jordan Trade Association, said in an interview. Noting that both the Jordanian and Palestinian markets are geographically and historically an extension to each other, Dr. Saket said it would be better to reconsider the economic agreements between the two sides in order to lift commercial and customs restrictions and maximise cooperation and trade.

Dr. Saket said trade protocols have facilitated the opening of new markets for Jordanian products in the past but, in the long run, these protocols have been among the hindrances to exports by not encouraging exporters to focus on quality and international standards and to diversify their output. He indicated that the Kingdom's financial and exporting institutions lack the initiative and the means to use new alternatives in the banking and commercial operations and stressed the need to introduce and encourage future trading and financing techniques.

Asked about the barriers that impede our national industries from competing internationally, Dr. Saket mentioned the following points:

— Weak adherence to international standards in production and packaging

— Lack of raw materials at competitive prices due to the limited internal market

— Limited knowledge of the size of outside markets

— Lack of regular and direct shipping lines to numerous destinations around the world

— Lack of specialised export departments at Jordanian companies

— Weak research and development departments at institutions

— Limited information about international markets

— Reluctance of exporters to invest in foreign markets through participation in fairs, printing catalogues, joining trade delegations, etc.

— Low productivity due to weak qualifications and development

Dr. Saket proposed four points to encourage exports. First, to set up coordination committees between the public and private sectors to lay down export policies and supervise their implementation. (May be a higher council for exports?). Second, to set up export houses (similar to those in Turkey and Japan) with joint government and private capital to be managed by the concerned sector. The remaining two proposals were to give a prize to the "best exporter" and to grant privileges and facilities or specific exemptions to companies with regard to the volume of exports.

Dr. Saket, a former minister of industry and trade, pointed out that a foreign investor weighs many factors before deciding to select a particular investment project. He mentioned intellectual property rights, market freedom, good public administration and degree of government role in the economy as main areas of concern to a potential foreign investor (Al Aswaj).

Financial Markets

Jordan Times in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency New York Closes Date: 26/2/96 Tokyo Closes Date: 27/2/96

Sterling Pound* 1.5410 1.5418**

Deutsche Mark 1.4518 1.4488

Swiss Franc 1.1807 1.1789**

French Franc 4.9875 4.9816**

Japanese Yen 104.41 106.21

European Currency Unit 1.2650 1.2666**

* USD Per STD ** European Opening @ 8:00 a.m. GMT

Inter-currency Interest Rates Date: 27/2/1996

Currency 1 MTH 3 MTHS 6 MTHS 12 MTHS

U.S. Dollar 5.06 5.00 4.94 4.93

Sterling Pound 6.00 6.00 6.00 6.06

Deutsche Mark 5.12 5.12 5.12 5.18

Swiss Franc 1.25 1.31 1.43 1.62

French Franc 8.75 3.87 3.93 4.06

Japanese Yen 0.75 0.31 0.37 0.43

European Currency Unit 4.62 4.56 4.56 4.69

Interbank bid rates for accounts settling U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Forward Metals Date: 27/2/1996

Metal USD/Oz JD/Gm Metal USD/Oz JD/Gm

Gold 398.95 7.90 Silver 5.50 0.100

* Per 100 ** Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency Bid Offer Date: 27/2/1996

U.S. Dollar 0.7080 0.7100

Sterling Pound 1.090 1.0966

Deutsche Mark 0.4875 0.4899

Swiss Franc 0.5994 0.6024

French Franc 0.1419 0.1426

Japanese Yen 0.6779 0.6813

Dutch Guilder 0.4353 0.4375

Swedish Krona 0.0455 0.0457

Italian Lire* 0.0455 0.0457

Belgian Franc *****

Other Currencies Date: 27/2/1996

Currency Bid Offer

Bahraini Dinar 1.8620 1.8780

Lebanese Lira* 0.044385 0.044835

Saudi Riyal 0.1870 0.1895

Kuwaiti Dinar 2.3070 2.3670

Qatari Riyal 0.1922 0.1945

Egyptian Pound 0.2000 0.2100

Omani Riyal 1.8350 1.8410

UAE Dirham 0.1922 0.1933

Greek Drachma* 0.2445 0.3115

Cypriot Pound 1.4865 1.5625

* Per 100

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET				
HOUSING BANK OFFERS AMMAN - JORDAN				
ORGANIZED MARKET SECTOR - 27/2/1996				
COMPANY NAME	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED	PARV. CLOSING	CHANGE
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	150	29475	235.200	134.280
JORDAN DEVELOPMENT BANK	1779	1784	4.420	1.380
JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	1500	3933	2.830	2.620
JORDAN COMMERCIAL BANK	250	640	2.830	2.820
JORDAN TRADING BANK	212	1094	5.200	2.150
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	182	1094	2.770	770
JORDAN GULF BANK	15800	15800	1.010	1.000
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	15229	61075	4.100	4.000
JORDAN SAVINGS & INVESTMENT BANK	4250	4250	3.400	1.400
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	2000	6050	3.030	3.020
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	8878	6981	0.830	790
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	1032	2274	1.270	730
BANKS SECTOR	52072	136827	INDEX NUMBER: 186.88	CHANGE: -0.232
JORDAN POWER INSURANCE	500	1410	2.820	2.820
INSURANCE SECTOR	500	1410	INDEX NUMBER: 128.94	CHANGE: -0.007
JORDAN ELECTRIC POWER	12046	22827	1.780	1.780
JORDAN PORTLAND CEMENT	1350	2040	1.870	1.840
JORDAN PORTLAND CEMENT	450	434	0.960	0.970
JORDAN PORTLAND CEMENT	14645	22765	1.610	1.610
JORDAN PORTLAND CEMENT	1850	1093	1.160	1.150
JORDAN PORTLAND CEMENT	3500	7312	2.170	2.140
JORDAN PORTLAND CEMENT	2600	2334	0.920	0.900
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	36450	59040	INDEX NUMBER: 126.71	CHANGE: -0.482
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	2942	14550	3.490	3.470
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	750	4275	5.700	5.700
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	2715	26807	9.880	9.900
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	250	475	3.520	3.400
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	580	2162	4.440	4.430
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	3212	19920	6.200	6.280
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	330	710	2.190	2.200
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	2700	19675	6.950	6.900
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	4350	25047	5.710	5.750
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	1750	328	0.540	0.530
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	4450	6282	1.420	1.410
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	1364	1854	0.970	0.960
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	950	990	1.130	1.100
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	1210	1841	1.020	1.050
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	2680	4716	2.900	2.850
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	3200	5875	1.810	1.760
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	5000	8021	1.230	1.220
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	2850	8748	2.430	2.370
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	4500	6099	1.370	1.360
JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	3500	4105	1.420	1.410
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	49933	160038	INDEX NUMBER: 128.86	CHANGE: -0.311
GRAND TOTAL	138756	367206	INDEX NUMBER: 154.89	CHANGE: -0.632
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET	91351			
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET	66929			

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

One U.S. dollar	1.3738/48	Canadian dollar	1.4530/40
	1.6268/78	Deutsche marks	1.6268/78
	1.1822/32	Dutch guilders	1.1822/32
	4.9888/98	Swiss francs	29.88/92
	1552.3/3.8	Belgian francs	4.9888/98
	104.61/71	French francs	1552.3/3.8
	6.6770/50	Italian lire	104.61/71
	6.3400/24	Japanese yen	6.6770/50
	3.4080/90	Norwegian crowns	6.3400/24
	0.7587/92	Danish crowns	3.4080/90
	7.7307/17	Singapore dollars	0.7587/92
		Australian dollars	7.7307/17
One sterling	\$1.5380/90	Hong Kong dollars	
Gold (ounce)	\$399.40/399.90		

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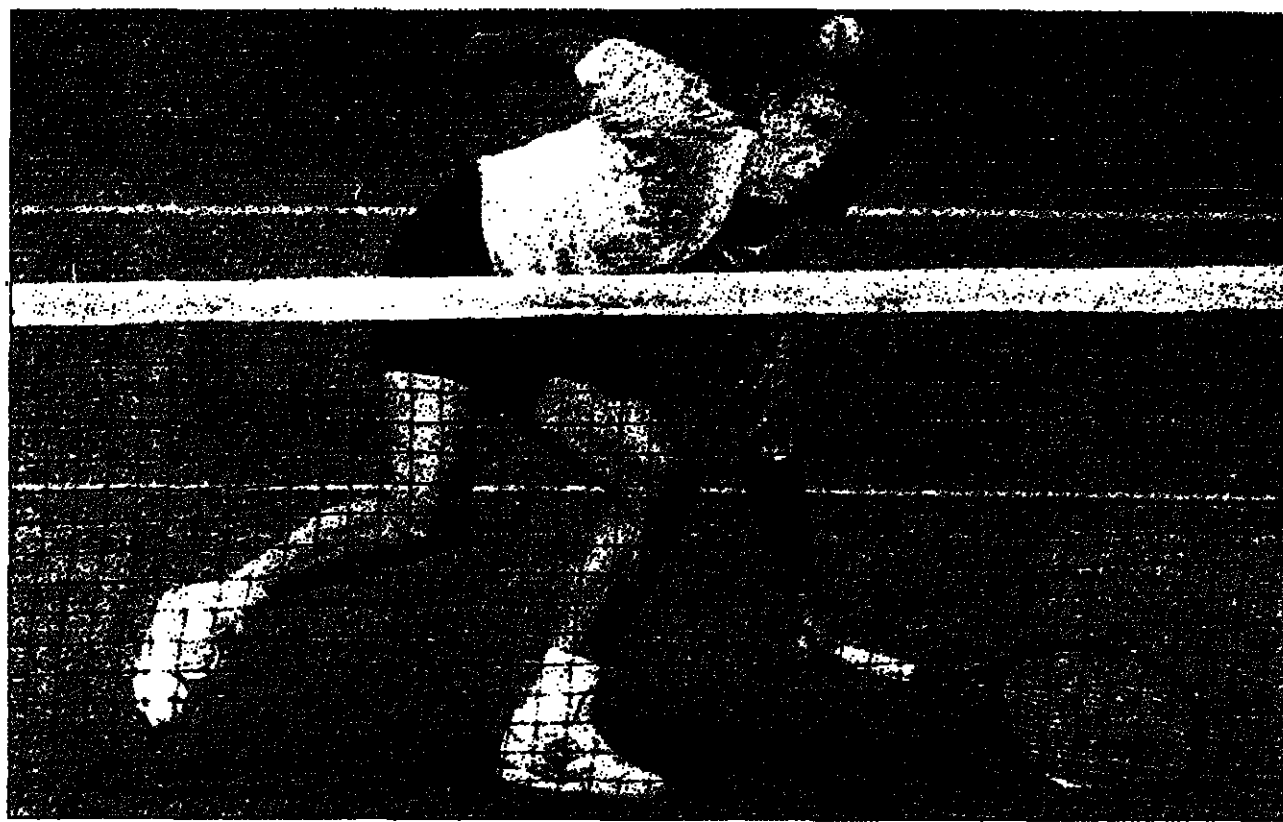
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Martina Navratilova

Navratilova may play 24th Wimbledon

NEW YORK (R) — Retired tennis star Martina Navratilova may yet appear in her 24th consecutive Wimbledon this year with a chance to equal the all-time record of 20 titles at the championships.

"It is completely 50-50 at this point, I really don't know," Navratilova said at a news conference to announce her participation in HBO's Wimbledon coverage, along with Billie Jean King and Mary Carillo.

"We will see how the body responds when I start putting it through the paces again," said the 39-year-old Navratilova, who retired from playing full time in 1994.

In her 23rd consecutive Wimbledon last year, Navratilova won the mixed doubles title with American Jonathan Starks, her 19th career Wimbledon crown.

She holds the Wimbledon record of nine singles titles and

also has claimed seven women's doubles titles and three mixed doubles crowns at the All-England Club.

King currently holds the all-time mark with 20 career Wimbledon titles — six singles, 10 doubles and four mixed doubles. King teamed with Navratilova in 1979 to win her record 20th title.

Starks has committed to playing with Navratilova again this year and she said she hoped to make up her mind by April. She also said she still might play women's doubles at Wimbledon if she can find a suitable partner, though Navratilova entertains no such thoughts about any of the other Grand Slam tournaments.

"The place is magical and I love playing on grass," she said. "Chances are if Wimbledon was played on any other surface, I probably wouldn't be as tempted."

Japan count on S. America for 2002 cup bid

TOKYO (AFP) — The presence of dozens of Latin American footballers in the J-League is helping Japan in its battle with South Korea to host the 2002 World Cup finals.

Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso told Japanese journalists in Brasilia overnight that he would back the Japanese bid, the Kyodo news agency reported Tuesday.

"I would choose Japan because it is better prepared to be the host country for the finals," said Cardoso, who was due to visit this major aid-providing nation in March.

He added that the presence of dozens of Brazilians, some of whom guided their country to World Cup glory in the 1994, had decisively contributed to improving soccer in Japan, Kyodo said.

Brazilians account for half the 64 foreigners on the Japanese J-League payroll for the new season which starts on March 16. There are also eight Argentines and a Paraguayan international.

Last week, visiting Argentine Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella told his Japanese counterpart, Yukihiko Ikeda, that he was backing Japan.

"Other South American countries will also back Japan's bid," Di Tella was quoted by Japanese officials as saying.

Olympic stadium repairs — how badly needed?

ATLANTA (AP) — The reason the Olympic stadium needed \$3 million in repairs and reinforcements before it even opened may remain a mystery until after the games, when organisers try to get that money back.

Though the need to reinforce parts of the steel structure was discovered in an engineering review that was prompted by a fatal construction accident, no evidence has surfaced to suggest that the additional problems — now being corrected — posed a safety threat.

The repairs, including reinforcing steel supports in the press box and other areas, have been described instead as needed to forestall costly repairs after the building becomes the home of the Atlanta Braves Major League Baseball team.

However, there has been no public documentation of exactly why the reinforcements were needed, leaving some to wonder whether the crown jewel of the 1996 games in best with uncorrectable problems.

"The information has not come forth. It's a bad situation to be in," said Reggie Williams, executive director of the Atlanta-Fulton county recreation authority, which gets the \$230 million, 83,500-seat stadium for free after the Olympics but will be responsible for its upkeep.

"When you start talking about reinforcements, that's not aesthetics. That's integrity and safety," Williams said. "There are things everybody's concerned about... but they require an explanation."

The engineer's report, obtained by the Associated Press, detailed where the work was being done but did not address why.

Officials at the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) are convinced the finished stadium will be safe and sound.

"Other than the complicating factors of cost and complexity that it adds to the completion of the work, there is no risk, there is no concern over the ultimate safety of the facility," said Bill Moss, the ACOG construction manager.

Moss refused to discuss specifics of the repairs, in part because the issue of who was at fault for necessitating the added work probably is headed for court.

Though \$3 million is a fraction compared with the total cost of the stadium, ACOG is paying \$207 million to build the Olympic stadium and convert it to a baseball park, while the Braves are chipping in \$23 million.

The story of the stadium repairs began with a plan, since scrapped, by ACOG to string a trolley from a light tower for a high-wire act during the opening ceremony.

While evaluating that plan, a structural engineer from Rosser International, one of the four firms that together designed the stadium, discovered that he had miscalculated how much weight the tower could hold, according to an investigation last year by the occupational health and safety administration, a federal government bureaucracy.

The design team, however, did not immediately take corrective action, Osha said. Ten days later, a truss on the tower collapsed, sending construction worker Jack Falls 46 metres to his death and injuring a co-worker.

After the accident, the design consortium hired Weidinger Associates Inc., a New York-based structural engineering firm, to recommend how to rebuild the light tower and also to conduct a "peer review" of the entire stadium.

In a report dated Oct. 27 but not publicly acknowledged until last month, Weidinger said the stadium needs more braces and beam in the press area, exterior pedestrian ramps, and roof trusses and corbels, the concrete supports that project from a wall.

"If Jack hadn't died, these things would have been overlooked also," said Lynne Falls, the construction worker's sister.

Noah Long, Rosser's senior vice president who has acted as a spokesman for the design team, was out of town and could not be reached for comment. He has previously described the work as enhancements to make an already solid stadium stronger.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

PSG coach will not quit

PARIS (AFP) — Luis Fernandez, the embattled coach of French league leaders Paris Saint Germain, dismissed talk of resignation on Monday in the wake of another dismal performance at the weekend. PSG topped three consecutive league defeats by being dumped out of the French Cup third round on Saturday by Auxerre. The club reacted by setting up a crisis committee on Sunday to try and stem the disastrous run. But Fernandez, criticised recently for his team selection, said that "not for one moment" had he thought of quitting. "It's not in my nature to get discouraged and that possibility has not been on the agenda," he said, adding: "I have complete freedom in team selection." Though PSG are still top of the French First Division, second-placed Auxerre trail by three points with a game in hand. And third place-Metz, four points behind PSG, have two games in hand. The present crisis could not have come at a worse time for PSG, who face Parma in the European Cup quarter-finals next month.

Stoichkov in boycott threat

SOFIA (AFP) — Bulgaria will boycott their friendly against England next unless they are paid bonuses for having reached the European Championship finals, goal ace Hristo Stoichkov warned here. The Parma striker issued the warning on his arrival on Monday night from Italy. According to Sport newspaper, each member of the national squad should get a share of a million dollar bonus for having qualified for the Euro 96 finals, which England are hosting in June. Bulgaria, who are due to walk out at Wembley Stadium on March 27, have a warm-up match against a Russian second division side, Shinnik Yaroslavl, here on Wednesday.

Reid fined and suspended

NEW YORK (AFP) — The National Basketball Association suspended New York Knicks forward J.R. Reid on Monday for two games and fined him \$10,000 for elbowing A.C.

Green of Phoenix Suns during a game on Sunday. The fine is the stiffest penalty in NBA history for an elbowing incident, NBA senior vice president Rod Thorn said. Reid struck Green in the mouth with his elbow early in the fourth quarter of the Suns' 113-105 victory. Green lost two teeth and was hospitalised overnight. X-rays showed no fracture of the jawbone and Green was expected to play Monday night against Utah. Green has the longest current consecutive games played streak with 783, 122 short of the all-time record held by former Buffalo Braves guard Randy Smith. In his 11 NBA seasons he has missed only three games. Reid denied reports that he had said he was out to get Green. He said he had words with Suns centre John "Hot Rod" Williams. "Hopefully he'll be OK," Reid said. "I told Hot Rod because he was hanging on to my jersey just to get off me. Out to get A.C.? No."

St. Etienne get new coach

SAINT-ETIENNE (AFP) — Former French international defender Dominique Bathenay was named Saint Etienne's coach till the end of the season here on Monday, succeeding Elie Baup who was sacked at the weekend. Bathenay, a former Saint Etienne player, coached Sete and Reims prior to taking charge. Former French captain Maxime Bossis had taken temporary control after Baup's dismissal. The club, who play Lyon at home on Tuesday, lie third from bottom of the French First Division.

IOC in talks with Bosnians

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (AFP) — An IOC delegation met with the Bosnian Prime Minister Hasan Muratovic on Monday to discuss rebuilding destroyed Olympic arenas in Sarajevo. IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch had previously pledged \$10 million to the project to rebuild the arenas, used for the 1994 Winter Olympics, that have been destroyed in more than three years of civil war.

Jazz rout Suns

SALT LAKE CITY (R) — A.C. Green made a Cameo appearance to keep his consecutive games streak alive, but his presence did little to inspire his Phoenix Suns teammates on Monday.

Karl Malone scored 27 points and John Stockton added 16 points and 11 assists to lead the Utah Jazz to a 110-87 thumping of the Suns.

Charles Barkley had 17 points and Danny Manning added 16 for Phoenix, which had its season-high four-game winning streak snapped. Barkley had just six rebounds, snapping his 18-game streak of double-doubles.

Green, won had two teeth knocked out by a vicious elbow from J. R. Reid of the New York Knicks on Sunday, played 68 seconds and left the game to extend his streak to 785 consecutive games played, the longest current streak in the league and 121 shy of the all-time NBA record.

The Jazz won for the fifth time in six games to regain sole possession of first place in the Midwest Division, half a game ahead of San Antonio.

Utah used a first-quarter 11-2 run and a second-quarter 17-8 spurt to put the game out of reach. "They played real well, they shot the ball well... and we didn't do a good job," said Phoenix coach Cotton Fitzsimmons.

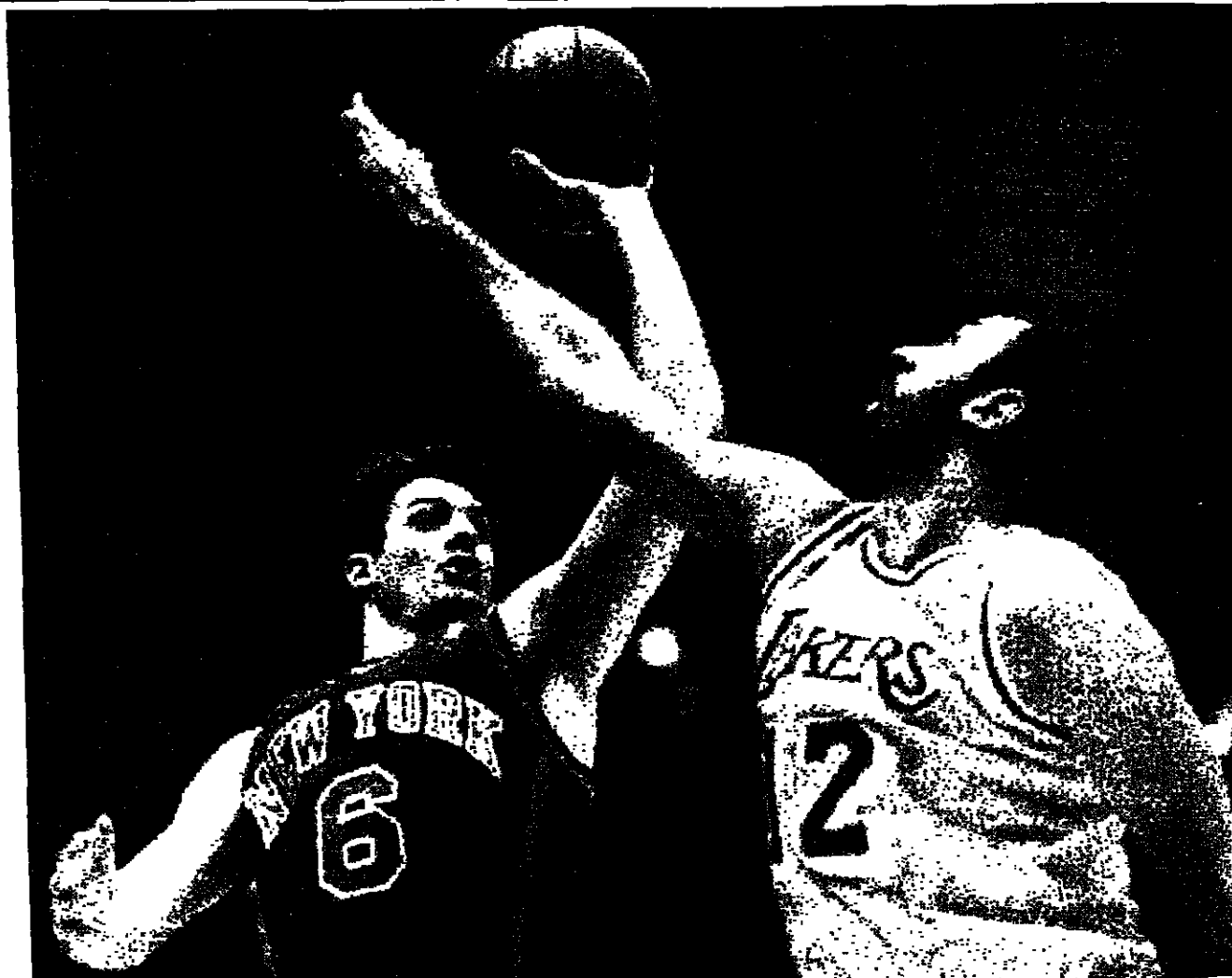
"I thought we were making some progress, but we took a couple of steps backward tonight."

In Boston, Reggie Miller scored 39 points, including a three-pointer with six seconds left in overtime, to lift the Indiana Pacers to a 122-119 win over the Celtics.

Miller was held scoreless in overtime until hitting the trey from the left wing to give the Pacers at 120-119 edge.

The Celtics had a chance for a final shot but Dee Brown stepped out of bounds for the second time in the extra session after receiving the inbound pass with 2.2 seconds left.

Dino Radja scored a season-high 33 points and



The New York Knicks Matt Fish (left) one-hands a jump shot as the Los Angeles Lakers Vlade Divac defends, in the first period of their game at the Forum in Inglewood (Reuters photo)

David Wesley added 23 for the Celtics, who have dropped five in a row.

Rik Smits had 19 points and 13 rebounds for the Pacers, who had seven players in double figures.

At Los Angeles, Cedric Ceballos scored 27 points and Elden Campbell added 17

points and 10 rebounds as the streaking Lakers beat the undermanned New York Knicks 114-96.

Eddie Jones scored 16 points and Sedale Threat added 15 for the Lakers, who won for the ninth time in 10 games and snapped a seven-game losing streak to New

York, dating to March 10, 1992.

Anthony Mason had 23 points and nine rebounds and Derek Harper added 16 points for the Knicks, who dressed just nine players with starters Patrick Ewing and Charles Oakley injured and J. R. Reid sitting out the first

of his two-game suspension for elbowing Phoenix forward A. C. Green Sunday.

RESULTS

Indiana 122, Boston 119 (OT)
Utah 110, Phoenix 87
LA Lakers 114, New York 96
Detroit 93, Sacramento 78

GOREN BRIDGE			
WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANAWI HIRSH Circle 7 (Phone: 634-1144)			
CHOOSE THE RIGHT STRAIN			
Both vulnerable. South deals.			
NORTH			
♠ A 6			
♥ A 7 2			
♦ A 7 2			
♣ A 7 5 4			
WEST			
♠ Q 7 4 3			
♥ Q 6			
♦ 10 9			
♣ K Q J 6 3			
SOUTH			
♠ A K 10 9 5			
♥ K 9			
♦ Q J 6 4 3			
♣ 8			
The bidding:			
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST			
1♠ Pass 3♠ Pass			
3♠ Pass 4♠ Pass			

might well fail, but four spades required no more than normal breaks in spades and diamonds.

West led the king of clubs, taken in dummy with the ace, and the jack of spades was played in an effort to tempt East to cover. When East followed low, however, declarer spurned the finesse in favor of cashing the ace and king, in an effort to drop her majesty. When the queen did not appear, declarer abandoned trumps in favor of setting up the diamond suit.

A diamond to the ace and a diamond back fetched the king from East, and declarer was in control. The diamond suit was established and, even if East gave West a ruff, who best the defenders could do was to take two trumps and a diamond. East tried valiantly by forcing declarer to ruff a club. Another trump lead now by South would have been fatal, but South simply started running red-suit winners, allowing West to score both trumps at leisure, but no more.

spades, to see what would ensue. South's raise to game ended the auction. After a club lead, possible from East's holding, three no trump

TODAY AT

CINEMA TEL: 634-1144

PHILADELPHIA

Jean Claude Van Dam
in
SUDDEN DEATH
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

CINEMA TEL: 699238

PLAZA

Adel Emam/Dalal Abdel
Azeez/ Shereen Saaf AlNaser
Sleeping on Honey
(Arabic)
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL: 677-420

CONCORD

CONCORD "1"
Adel Emam/Dalal Abdel Azeez/
Shereen Saaf AlNaser
Sleeping on Honey
(Arabic)
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:30
CONCORD "2"
Van Dam/Roger Moore
THE QUEST
Shows: 12, 1:45, 3:30, 5:15, 6:45

AMMOUN THEATRE &
CINEMA/TEL: 618274 - 618275

Ahmad Zaki / Ragdah
in
ESTAKOZA
(Arabic)
Shows: 12:30, 3, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

Nabil & Hisham's Theatre
TEL: 625155

Performances of the play
**"Ahlan Hukouq Al
Insan Al Arabi"**
Welcome
Arab Human Rights
Will cease
from Feb. 26 till March 18

Billie Jean King: U.S. team would balk at playing in Germany

NEW YORK (R) — U.S. Fed Cup captain Billie Jean King said Monday the United States would balk at playing in Germany with Monica Seles on the team if the two nations advanced to a show-down in the semifinals, this summer.

"I don't think we should go to Germany because of the situation," King told Reuters. "If we have to play (against) Germany, we should have a neutral place."

Seles, sidelined for more than two years before coming back last summer after being stabbed in the back during a match in Hamburg in April 1993, has vowed not to play in Germany. Her attacker, Gantner Parche, was not sentenced to jail time for the crime.

Seles began her comeback by winning Canadian Open last summer. Since then she has reached the 1995 U.S. Open final and won this year's Australian Open.

The U.S. Fed Cup team must win in Austria, and Germany prevail against Japan in opening-round matches April 27-28 to set up a semifinal clash July 13-14.

"We are on a collision course," King said of the two teams, who are both heavy favorites in the opening round.

With that in mind, talks with Fed Cup officials have already been initiated by U.S. officials, according to King, who appeared at a news conference to promote HBO's Wimbledon coverage team of King, Martina Navratilova and Mary Carillo.

"We have already put in a request a long time ago that we want to work through this," said King. "I really do not want to go to Germany. I would hope we could resolve this."

King is counting on having Seles as the United States' first Cup title since 1990 and 15th overall. Last year the U.S. team, without Seles, lost in the final in Spain.

"We need her if we are going to win the whole thing," King said. "From everything that Monica tells me, and she has told the world, she wants to play."

Seles has stated her interest in playing Fed Cup so she could be eligible to play in the Olympics this summer. She had been on the team for last year's final, but withdrew with a knee injury just days before the first match.

King said she is also eyeing Jennifer Capriati, who has not played regularly since 1993 as she battled personal problems and undergone drug rehabilitation, as a possibility for the U.S. team's first-round tie in Salzburg.

"I think she will want to play," King said of Capriati, who reached the quarter-finals last week at Essen, Germany, in her first tournament in more than a year.

"I hope both (Seles and Capriati) are available because we have to have our best team," said King.

Weah escapes death

IMPERIA, Italy (AP) — Golden Ball winner George Weah and AC Milan teammate Patrick Vieira escaped a one-car accident Monday without serious injury, reports said.

The car skidded and crashed against a guard-rail just outside Imperia, 40 kilometres from the French border. A police official said Weah was driving.

Police initially said Weah was accompanied by French teammate Marcel Desailly, but later the team said the passenger was Vieira, the ANSA news agency reported.

Weah's car was travelling on the Savona-Ventimiglia highway, according to a police inspector who refused to give his full name.

Weah, 30, scored for the fourth straight match in Italian first division leader Milan's 1-1 draw Sunday with Juventus.

Ferdinand hits back at Newcastle critics following Asprilla ruling

LONDON (AFP) — Newcastle could be without their controversial 17 million Colombian World Cup star Faustino Asprilla for the most vital phase of the title run-in.

But Les Ferdinand has hit back at the sceptics who are predicting that Newcastle's title challenge will run out of steam.

The Premiership leaders have had their advantage at the top of the table cut to four points after losing 2-0 at West Ham and scraping a 3-3 draw at Manchester City, while rivals Manchester United have won their last eight games.

But Ferdinand, who has netted 25 times season, dismissed suggestions that nerves could lead to the Magpies losing their grip on the title.

"There's no doom and gloom among the Newcastle players," said the 26 million striker. "There isn't a side in the Premiership who would swap places with us."

"We are disappointed at only picking up one point from our matches at West Ham and Manchester City but we didn't play badly in either game."

"I suppose Manchester United and the rest are hoping we will lose our nerve. Well I've a message for them — we won't."

Asprilla could be on the sidelines for up to six matches after being charged with misconduct by the Football Association following incidents in the 3-3 draw at Maine Road on Saturday.

The South American striker and Manchester City skipper Keith Curle have both been charged after clashing twice.

Asprilla, making only his second full appearance for Newcastle after his move from Parma, has been charged with two counts of misconduct and Curle with one.

Meanwhile, former St James's Park skipper Glenn Roeder urged Newcastle that trying to change the ways of Asprilla could work against them.

Ex-Watford manager Roeder knows all about the South American temperament as he was given the task of looking after Mirandinha when the Brazilian arrived in the North East in the 1980s.

Roeder said: "You'll never change Asprilla. You'll just have to accept him and try to understand him."

"South Americans are a different breed. Newcastle can talk until they are blue in the face but they won't change him."

"And Asprilla will now find, like Mirandinha, that, because of his background, defenders in the Premiership will try and wind him up."

Asprilla has stringently denied there had been any intent to injure Curle in the first clash, although he did not discuss the butting incident.

He explained: "I was trying to push him away and trying to escape. He had his arms around me and I wanted to get free."

"All I was trying to do was avoid him. I was pushing and pushing but I didn't know I had hit him in the face."

"It certainly wasn't my intention to elbow him — and what I did wasn't that strong."



Venezuelan Felix Hernandez screams in celebration on Monday, after his team classified to the final round of the South American Olympics qualifying championship. Venezuela's match against Chile ended in a 0-0 draw. Two teams will qualify for the Atlanta 1996 Olympics. (Reuters photo)

Spurs, Forest in FA clash today

LONDON (AFP) — Ruel Fox could plunge Gerry Francis into a tactical crisis if he fails to recover from injury in time for Wednesday night's FA Cup fifth round tie at Nottingham Forest.

The 24 million winger has missed training since damaging a leg muscle near the end of Tottenham's 1-0 Premiership victory over Sheffield Wednesday on Saturday.

If he is ruled out it would mean Francis going into one of Spurs' most important matches of the season without his first-choice flank men.

Former Wednesday winger Andy Sinton is cup-tied so Ronny Rosenthal, substitute on Saturday, stands by for a recall.

"Fox has a bit of a dead leg and we probably won't know until the last moment whether he can make it," said Francis. "It's a bit worrying because we are getting short of players at the moment."

Muster loses at Italian indoors

MILAN (AP) — Top-seeded Thomas Muster was upset by Italy's Andrea Gaudenzi 6-3, 6-4 in the first round Italian indoors ATP tournament Monday night.

Italian fans went wild at Milan's Palatrussardi Arena as the 22-year-old local player, ranked 35th in the ATP computer and unseeded in the tournament, upset the No. 2 player in the world in 1 hour, 18 minutes.

It was the second consecutive first-round elimination for Muster, who lost to Sandon Stolle in Dubai earlier this month.

Gaudenzi, who trains with Muster because both players have the same manager, broke the Austrian in the sixth game of the first set and in the fifth game of the second for a clear-cut victory.

The Italian player was more powerful and precise from the baseline and served well while Muster alternated good forehand shots with several unforced backhand mistakes.

"I was better and re-serve. I did not take much risk in the first set," said Muster, who recently lost a 1 spot in the ATP list to Pete Sampras.

Gaudenzi said his brief reign as No. 1 in the world distanced him from tennis.

"I was overly busy with interviews, with my sponsors. I'm glad I can fully devote to tennis again," Muster said.

Gaudenzi earned a second-round berth against his Italian Davis Cup teammate, Renzo Furlan, who defeated Jakob Hlasek of Switzerland in three sets in an earlier match. Furlan, who won the decisive match in Italy's 3-2 upset of Russia in the Davis cup, defeated Hlasek 6-4, 3-6, 6-1.

In other first-round matches of the \$814,250 tournament, Guy Forget made short work of fellow Frenchman Jerome Hanquez 6-3, 6-4; France's Arnaud Boetsch defeated Belgian qualifier Dick Norman 7-6 (7-3), 6-4; and Adrian Panata of Romania downed Spaniard Javier Sanchez 6-2, 5-7, 6-3.

Voinca, who lost the second set after building a 5-2 lead, rallied from 0-2 to win the decisive third set.

"I played aggressively and I took risks to beat Muster," Gaudenzi said. "Thomas was not 100 per cent tonight, and when he's not in his top physical form he can be beaten. It's a pity that there is an all-Italian second round and that either me or Renzo must be eliminated."

Furlan, who reached his highest ATP ranking ever — No. 24 — this month, said he was looking forward to breaking into the top 20.

A clay specialist who's doing increasingly well on hard courts, Furlan was a losing quarterfinalist against Croat big server Goran Ivanisevic in Antwerp last week.

Ivanisevic, who lost the Antwerp final to Michael Stich Sunday, is the No. 4 seed in Milan.

Stich, who is playing his third ATP tournament since he suffered a bad ankle injury last October, is the No. 7 in the Italian indoors with Boris Becker No. 2 and Russian Yevgeny Kafelnikov No. 3.

The Italian indoors awards a top prize of \$128,000.

Men's tennis rankings

1. Pete Sampras (USA)	4,805
2. Thomas Muster (Aut)	4,474
3. Andre Agassi (USA)	4,432
4. Boris Becker (GER)	3,881
5. Michael Chang (USA)	3,470
6. Goran Ivanisevic (Cro)	2,587
7. Jim Courier (USA)	2,369
8. Yevgeny Kafelnikov (Rus)	2,368
9. Thomas Enqvist (Swe)	2,233
10. Wayne Ferreira (Rsa)	1,965
11. Sergi Bruguera (Spa)	1,685
12. Michael Stich (Ger)	1,579
13. Andrei Medvedev (Ukr)	1,451
14. Marc Rosset (Swi)	1,421
15. Todd Martin (USA)	1,398
16. Arnaud Boetsch (Fra)	1,385
17. Alberto Costa (Spa)	1,364
18. MaliVai Washington (USA)	1,317
19. Gilbert Schaller (Aut)	1,291
20. Richard Krajicek (Ned)	1,252
21. Mark Philippoussis (Aus)	1,178
22. Marcelo Rios (Chi)	1,171
23. Jan Siemerink (Ned)	1,137
24. Renzo Furlan (Ita)	1,109
25. Mark Woodforde (Aus)	1,098
26. Magnus Larsson (Swe)	1,092
27. Jonas Bjorkman (Swe)	1,026
28. Bohdan Ulihrach (Cze)	1,001
29. Todd Woodbridge (Aus)	987
30. Byron Black (Zim)	986

German boxers to challenge IBF

BONN (R) — A ruling by the International Boxing Federation (IBF) denying Germany heavyweight Axel Schulz an early rematch against Frans Botha was a "low blow" and would be challenged, Germany's Association of Professional Boxers said on Tuesday.

The association's vice president Mario Hille said his group would fight Monday's IBF ruling that South African Botha, the reigning champion, must fight American Michael Moorer first.

"This is a low blow for fairness in boxing," Hille told RTL television. "We will meet by Wednesday at the latest and make clear we will not allow this. It's incredible how quickly the IBF changed its mind."

On Saturday, the IBF ruled that Botha could keep his crown despite taking anabolic steroids before his fight with Schulz last December.

The IBF fined Botha \$50,000, saying it felt the South African did not know the medicine a doctor had prescribed him was a steroid. It ordered him to give Schulz a rematch within 180 days with the winner going on to fight Moorer.

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JPMC announces the invitation to bid No. 9F/96, for the supply of:
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The tender documents are available at JPMC offices in Amman, Supply Department, until 2:00 p.m. local time Thursday 14th March 1996. Application for documents should be accompanied by a non-refundable fee of JD (15) for each set of tender documents.
The closing date for submitting bids is 12:00 hours local time Thursday 21 March 1996.
Sameh Madani
Managing Director

Female Cabin Crew Dubai
Emirates, the award-winning and rapidly expanding international airline of the United Arab Emirates, seeks to recruit female cabin crew.
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• Educated to Diploma or University level. • Minimum age 21 years, maximum 30 years. • Single.
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These positions are based in Dubai, the most cosmopolitan of Arabian Gulf cities, well-known for its high standard of living. Benefits include a competitive tax-free salary, furnished accommodation, 30 days' annual leave, medical care, duty transport, industry personal travel facilities and end of service gratuity.
Apply in English to the address given below, giving full details of your previous experience and qualifications for the position and enclosing recent full-length and passport-size photographs (in colour) and a contact telephone number. Applications must be received within 15 days quoting the reference code 'FCC/JT'.
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Emirates
THE FINEST IN THE SKY

Tias accuses Israel of obstinacy ahead of talks

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syria has accused Israel of obstinacy and expects no major results from the new round of peace talks with the Jewish state opening in the United States on Wednesday.

Defence Minister Lieutenant General Mustafa Tias said Syria will never cede any of its demands during the peace talks, including its call for full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

"Syria will never abandon any of its rights and will confront with big confidence any developments or changes and will never allow any force whatever it is to harm its sovereignty or dignity," he said in remarks published by official newspapers on Tuesday.

The reports said Gen. Tias was speaking to Syrian soldiers stationed in Lebanon during a visit on Monday.

Syria has 35,000 troops in Lebanon which is also involved in slow-moving peace talks with Israel.

Gen. Tias accused Israel of conducting "a policy of obstinacy and manoeuvring at the peace negotiations and of making aggressions against the brothers in South Lebanon to evade the requirements of peace."

Syrian and Israeli negotiators have already arrived in Washington to take part in the talks due to be held in Maryland near the U.S. capital with the participation of the U.S.

Official Syrian newspapers said the talks would not result in any major developments because Israeli leaders were unable to take any important decisions as they were busy

with general elections due in May.

"With a notable lack of enthusiasm and very low expectations, the next round of Syrian-Israeli talks will begin at Wye Plantation, Maryland tomorrow," the English-language daily Syria Times said.

"The problem is simply the Israeli decision to hold early elections for the Knesset," it said.

Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres, who leads in opinion polls after taking over from assassinated Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in November, moved up elections to May 29 from October.

But Mr. Peres' popularity has deteriorated according to latest polls after bomb attacks by the Hamas group which killed 25 people.

The Syrian press said the bombs should provide a motive for Peres to work for a just and comprehensive peace.

Syria Times on Tuesday urged Mr. Peres to commit himself to full withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

"The government of Shimon Peres should show itself ready to return to its earlier land-for-peace commitment even during election campaign time," Syria Times said.

Officials said the Maryland talks would focus on security arrangements which would back up a possible peace deal between Syria and Israel.

In addition to the security arrangements the talks, which opened in late 1991, are stalled over the fate of the Golan and the nature of fu-

ture ties.

Syria wants full withdrawal from the Golan and says security arrangements should be equal and balanced. Israel would not reveal the extent of pullback until Damascus agrees to establish full normal ties with the Jewish state.

"Syria is not expecting any breakthrough because the Israelis are too busy with the elections," a Syrian official, who declined to be named, told AFP on Tuesday.

"There is nothing in the Israeli position that indicates positive progress on the thorny issues," the official said, adding however, that any breakthrough depended on the role that Washington would play.

At the end of a peace mission to Syria and Israel earlier this month, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher pledged full U.S. support to help the two arch-enemies make peace. He said he would participate in the Wye talks.

A well-informed Syrian source stressed that the consequences of the Israeli general elections on future security arrangements between Israel and Syria remain unclear.

"The talks will freeze because the Israelis will slow down the rhythm and the United States will not be able to do anything in this case," said a Western diplomat in Damascus.

"It is also difficult to predict the results of these elections although there is a good chance that Peres will win them," the diplomat said.



NEW SANCTIONS: A group of Cuban-Americans visiting Cuba exchange their tickets home from Havana to Miami for tickets to Nassau, in the Bahamas, on Tuesday. There was confusion at the airport after U.S. President Bill Clinton announced the suspension of flights between Havana and Miami as part of the punitive measures in the wake of Cuba's shooting down of two civilian planes belonging to "Brothers to the Rescue." (see page one) (Reuters photo)

Arafat: Israeli extremists helped suicide bombings

AMMAN (J.T.) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat has told foreign diplomats that Israeli and Muslim extremists were responsible for Sunday's suicide bombings in Jerusalem and Ashkelon, according to an Israeli press report.

According to the report, which appeared in Tuesday's English-language Jerusalem Post daily, Mr. Arafat told the diplomats that he was sure the Israeli "fanatics" belonging to a shadowy group of ex-Israeli army soldiers called Organisation of Islamic Secret (OAS) supplied Muslim extremists with explosives, which, he said, "were not available anywhere in the world."

"Only a superman could have done it without Israeli aid," the U.N.'s top diplomat in Palestinian-ruled areas, Terje Larsen, quoted Mr. Arafat as having told him at a meeting on Monday.

"He alleges there is a conspiracy between Palestinian and Israeli extremist elements," Mr. Larsen said.

The Jerusalem Post quoted Israeli Foreign Minister Ehud

Barak dismissing Mr. Arafat's allegations, saying that the Palestinian leader should take care of his extremists and Israel will take care of its own.

The Post reported that Mr. Arafat told the diplomats that he would do all he could to track down the killers.

Some of the diplomats, which the paper quoted, told Mr. Arafat that he should regard the suicide bombings as a breach of an agreement which he had with Islamic militants who had promised the Palestinian president to cease attacks.

Mr. Arafat explained to the diplomats that the recent attacks came in retaliation for Israel's killing of Hamas' Yahya Ayash, dubbed "the engineer," the paper said, adding that Mr. Arafat described his talks with Hamas on violence as "complicated."

The paper added that Mr. Arafat dismissed what the diplomats perceived as an inevitable victory for the Likud Party in May elections if the attacks against Israel continued.

Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, claimed responsibility for the bombing on Sunday that killed 24 people on a Jerusalem bus and one person at an army hitch-hiking post in Ashkelon, southern Israel. Both bombers were also killed.

"He (Arafat) said the bomb was too sophisticated to be done by Palestinians alone and that it was unbelievable to him that the bomb got into the bus without some Israeli cooperation," Mr. Larsen told Reuters.

Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres and U.S. Ambassador Martin Indyk accused Mr. Arafat on Monday of not doing enough to stop the violence.

In a statement after the attacks on Sunday, the Palestinian National Authority charged that militant opponents on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian peace deals were cooperating.

Mr. Larsen said: "Arafat told me in a meeting that the Palestinian Authority's top priority and his personal top priority was security — and security for Israelis, his partners."

89 killed in Sudan air crash

KHARTOUM, (AP) — A military plane crashed in Sudan, killing all 89 passengers and crew on board, the Sudanese army said in a communique Tuesday.

The plane, identified as a Hercules transport, had been cleared to land Monday night at Khartoum airport when it went down about 38 kilometres south of the capital, the statement said.

The cause of the crash was not immediately known, but witnesses were quoted as saying the plane was on fire as it fell from the sky.

The crash occurred at about 6:55 p.m. (1655 GMT) Monday, or 10 minutes before the plane was due to land, the communique said.

"The (army's) general command carried out the necessary measures to locate the plane," the statement said. It said debris was found near the village of Jabal Aulia and that the plane was "totally burned, and all persons on board martyred."

The transport was en route from the town of Obied, which is 380 kilometres southwest of Khartoum, reports in Khartoum said. They said the area where the plane went down is hilly.

There was no breakdown on how many passengers and crew members were aboard. Some of the passengers could have been civilians, who often ride on military planes because of the lack of other transport.

Western governments have eliminated all the emergency aid to the country, one of the poorest in Africa, and both the United States and the European Union (EU) ban military sales.

The army, as a result, has suffered from shortages of equipment as well as spare parts.

There was no suggestion that the crash was related to unrest in Sudan.

Hariri orders security forces to counter union strike threat

BEIRUT (AFP) — The Lebanese government on Tuesday ordered the army to enforce security across the country over the next three months as well as a ban on demonstrations ahead of a general strike, Prime Minister Rafik Hariri said.

He was speaking at the end of an emergency meeting called to examine a request by the powerful General Confederation of Workers (CGTL) to hold street protests despite a ban imposed in 1993.

The CGTL, which represents 22 trade unions and claims more than 200,000 members, has called a general strike for Thursday over pay and political reforms. There was no immediate reaction from the confederation.

"The cabinet took a decision today to enforce the ban on street protests and have given the army instructions to be responsible for security over three months," Mr. Hariri told a press conference.

"It is clear to us that the CGTL decided to defy the authorities by calling for demonstrations," said Mr. Hariri, whose predecessor Omar Karami was forced to step down in 1992 after violent street demonstrations by workers in Beirut.

The CGTL announced

Monday its intention to go ahead with its nationwide strike to "defend liberties and our daily bread" and urged the government to revoke the ban on demonstrations.

It is demanding a 76 per cent increase in wages for the public and private sector, doubling minimum wages from 250,000 pounds (around \$160) to 500,000 pounds, as well as political and social reforms.

Backed by deputies, opposition forces and several professional unions, it is also opposed to a government decision taken earlier this year to reorganise the private media — a move which would reduce television stations from 50 to six and radio stations from more than 100 to 12.

The wealthy association of heads of private enterprises as well as the 80,000-member "autonomous services" — state-owned agencies which run their own budgets — are however among the CGTL's opponents.

"There is no going back to anarchy," which prevailed during the 1977-1990 civil war, Mr. Hariri declared.

"Those who dream of turning back the clock must know that this will never happen as long as we are here. And to them we say no, no, no to anarchy. No, no, no to a

return to the past."

Mr. Hariri dismissed mounting criticism of his government, which has come under repeated attack by CGTL leaders and the opposition over its vast post-war reconstruction programme.

"There are daily attempts to show that this government's only concern is infrastructure projects as if these projects are not meant for the people and to improve their lives," Mr. Hariri said.

The billionaire prime minister, who inaugurated a mid-town bridge on Monday to ease traffic congestion in Beirut, stressed that "roads, bridges, electricity projects are visible achievements by the government."

"Our action shows that we are not bloodsuckers," he said.

On July 19 the army stopped protests from taking place during a day-long nationwide strike called by the CGTL, surrounding union headquarters and firing warning shots in the air.

The July marches, called to protest a 30 per cent hike in petrol prices, prompted the biggest security operation since the end of the war. Nine people were slightly hurt in confrontations with troops and anti-riot police and more than 100 demonstrators rounded up. They were later freed.

Egyptians' rights are violated in Gulf — report

CAIRO (AFP) — The Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights denounced "violations of the rights" of Egyptian workers abroad, blaming both Cairo and Arab Gulf governments for their plight in a report issued Monday.

"The violations of the rights of Egyptian workers in the Arab oil-producing countries, especially in the Gulf, in the last few years reflects the lack of political and legal protection for them," the study said.

The rights group blamed the violations on "neglect by the Egyptian government which fails to guarantee these workers' rights and the lack of legislation assuring their rights in the host countries."

It denounced in particular the "sponsor system in the Gulf which reflects the discrimination between workers with citizenship in the host country and immigrants."

(Continued on page 7)

Serb leader accused of terror attack in war crimes tribunal

THE HAGUE (Agencies) — The U.N. war crimes tribunal on Tuesday heard how a shock rocket attack on Zagreb ordered last year by Krajina Serb leader Milan Martić sprayed the city centre with lethal shrapnel that left seven lying dead in the streets.

Graphic video footage shot immediately after the first of two attacks on May 2 and 3, 1995, pictured a woman face down in a pool of her own blood, killed as she waited for a tram.

The tribunal is expected to hear the testimony of survivors during three days of hearings which began on Tuesday.

Mr. Martić is charged with ordering the attacks in retaliation for a Croatian offensive against the breakaway Krajina Serbs and was indicted for war crimes last July.

The tribunal said in its indictment last July that Mr. Martić ordered the rockets be fitted with cluster bomb warheads.

The bombs are designed to

burst into a shower of hundreds of explosive parts which scatter over a large area when they hit the ground, making them ineffective against armour but devastating when used against people — in this case, civilians.

The Yugoslav government meanwhile announced that it was lifting sanctions imposed 18 months ago against rebel Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The lifting of the sanctions took effect at midnight Tuesday.

The announcement came as the United Nations prepared to suspend economic sanctions imposed on the Serbs by the international community.

Bosnian Serbs meanwhile continued to flow out of Sarajevo suburbs due to reversion to government hands in the coming days as the Red Cross announced an emergency aid for the thousands of displaced.

Civilian trucks queued up at the eastern entrance of the

city Tuesday to make their way through government-held parts of Sarajevo under NATO security arrangements, to reach the suburbs that are still in Serb hands.

By arrangement with NATO commanders, Bosnian Serb military and civilian vehicles are using direct routes running through government territory to reach the suburbs where thousands are preparing to leave.

Tens of thousands of Serbs have already left the city. Most are fleeing, fearful of retribution for the capital's brutal siege from those Muslims who will return home as authority in five of Sarajevo's suburbs passes to the mainly Muslim government by March 19.

Responding to the gathering humanitarian crisis, the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) launched an emergency programme of aid.

Mobile ICRC medical units have been set up along key routes in Republika Srpska, the Serbs' rebel state.

Hussein Kamel's draft charter called for sweeping changes in Iraq

By Serene Halasa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Shortly after his defection to Jordan in August of last year, Hussein Kamel called on the Iraqi opposition to meet with him to discuss a draft charter for the future of Iraq in a post-Saddam era.

The 38-page document, which he wrote during his six-month exile in Jordan called for a change in Iraq based on democracy, pluralism, and freedom. It strongly condemned the current regime, describing it as a single-handed dictatorship.

He clearly wanted the opposition to meet with him to discuss the draft. He believed it could be used as a basis for a new political life in Iraq.

"He blatantly accused the current regime of causing horrors and leading Iraq to its current situation. He wrote that lives had been dragged into war too often; that its people have suffered for too long, and that it was high time for change."

He wrote he believed that change could come through, "first, organising the work of the opposition, and second, intensifying the struggle to

completely uproot the current regime."

It was not clear to what extent the draft was circulated among Iraqi exiles before Hussein Kamel returned to Iraq last week and was killed.

"The new political regime in Iraq should be a free, democratic regime based on political pluralism, peaceful coexistence, and strict adherence to the civic, political, economic, and social rights of all (Iraqi) citizens," he wrote in the document, a copy of which was obtained by the Jordan Times.

He said Iraq was in a maze driven to it by the current one-man regime, that through its "internal repressive irresponsible policies, and its continuous involvement in war has caused Iraq's Arab and international isolation."

He called for the formation of what he called "a higher council to save Iraq" to lead the opposition movement and change the current regime.

He said he was motivated to write this draft charter because of the policies that the current regime had adopted since it came to power.

"It is a pity that all the political regimes in modern Iraq expressed solely their own will, instead of that of their people. They have neglected to respect the rights and aspirations of the masses."

Since July 17, 1968 (since Saddam Hussein took power) the political regime has adopted yet another policy which is a war policy," he wrote. "This policy has led to the destruction of our nation instead of its progress."

He said he was motivated by a new vision aimed at saving Iraq from "autocratic" rule by creating an alternate atmosphere based on pure democracy.

He clearly highlighted the Kurdish-Iraqi problem and called on the need to solve it in a way that would ensure "the rights of Iraqis of Kurdish origins." He said the proposed council would play a major role in promoting democracy, and creating a state of freedom, law, and institutions based on the respect for human life and minorities.

"National diversity is not something Iraq alone enjoys, but it is common to other

nations around the world. This is the bare reality that calls on us to lay the foundation of brotherly Arab-Kurdish relations based on national unity and gives us a chance to gain from other nations' experiences in that field," he wrote.

He called for dialogue with "our Kurdish brethren" that would guarantee their independent identity, and rights. He said that after this is done in a way that ensures their full rights, then the council should move on to a higher cause which is the national interest.

"We should commit to the basics of democracy in achieving our national interest. Steering away from democracy not only leads to autocracy, but also to the forfeiture of public freedoms and the spread of rumour and fear among the masses," he wrote.

The kind of democracy, he said the council would adopt was a democracy that believes in a multi-party system, with respect for the opinion of others; one that encourages a parliamentary life, and free elections.

"Free elections are the

only way to voice the wishes of the majority while preserving the rights of the minority," he wrote.

He also called for the separation of the executive, legislative and judiciary powers in order to allow for the total independence of the judiciary system.

"The democracy the council calls for is one that guarantees the rights of all ethnic and religious minorities, and looks upon them equally in the eyes of the law," he wrote.

In the charter he also touched on the rights and freedoms of thought, religion, opinion and expression of Iraqis. He wrote "every Iraqi has the right to hold his officials to account for their actions. Every Iraqi should be protected by law, and is granted a free and fair trial. Every Iraqi has a right to a citizenship and a passport which cannot be withdrawn except by law."

He said Iraqis had the right to work and strike if they felt their rights were not granted, he said. They also had the right to organise themselves in unions, and to get social security in cases of unemployment, sickness, injury, or

old age.

He wrote that he felt democracy would not be complete without freedom of trade. "We should encourage personal initiatives, and reinforce the economy without allowing the government to interfere except in cases that would benefit the national interest."

As for the freedom of the press, he said that he believed there should be a high degree of freedom of expression, and allowing the expression of the other opinion within the boundaries of the constitution. "Irresponsible freedom could lead to anarchy," he wrote.

He said that the media should never be exploited to achieve political aims, but should serve as a forum for expression.

The higher council to save Iraq, he wrote, would believe that the military should never get involved in politics.

Allowing the army to get involved in political life has set a precedent in the political life of Iraq, and we have seen the consequences of that involvement," he wrote. "The army's main duty is to

protect the nation and not be used as a tool to repress its people, and terminate political rivals."

In the charter, he outlined the role of the internal security apparatus saying that it should serve as a public servant by providing security, and upholding the law rather than using it as a tool of repression.

He also touched on Iraq's regional and international role, encouraging a "policy of neighbourly relations with Muslim Turkey and Iran."

He said he would like to see Iraq play a major role in promoting Muslim causes and helping Islamic nations around the world.

He also envisaged an Iraq that "respected the United Nations charter, and laws, as well as international agreements." He called for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, insisting that this region become a weapons-free zone.

The charter also touched on the rights of women, the right of freedom of religion, promoting the arts and culture, and encouraging free government-sponsored education.

Dead man found in block of ice on Danish beach

COPENHAGEN (AFP) — A pair of beachcombers came across a large block of ice encasing a nude corpse in southeastern Denmark, police said Tuesday.

The man, with Asian features, was found on the beach in Roedvig and was being examined by coroners who were expected to take several days to identify him, police said.

Inspector Bruno Juul-Pedersen speculated that the death was "apparently (the result of) a crime that took place a few weeks ago, even if the victim bears no apparent signs of a knife or bullet in the body." The death was probably not a suicide, as people "rarely strip completely naked when they want to end their lives," he said.

Juul-Pedersen said. The man was aged between 20 and 25, thin, and 1.85 metres (about six feet) tall, with black hair and dark skin. The couple who discovered the body were walking along the shore to look at ice blocks in the Baltic Sea. First they saw a human foot, then the entire body frozen in the ice.

China lays claim to Lee's Berlin film award

BEIJING (R) — Beijing effectively laid claim to the 1996 Berlin International Film Festival's coveted Golden Bear Award Tuesday, describing winning director Ang Lee as hailing from China. The Taiwanese director won an unprecedented second Golden Bear for best picture Monday with Sense and Sensibility, an American-British production based on the novel by 19th century British writer Jane Austen. Lee won the award in 1993 for The Wedding Banquet, China's official Xinhua News Agency reported.

Lee's success as a victory for China, calling him a "Chinese director." From China's Taiwan province, the Chinese mainland and Taiwan have had no official ties since 1949, when the Chinese Nationalists, vanquished by the Communists in a civil war, took refuge on the offshore island. Both maintain that Taiwan is a part of China. China's embrace of Lee's Sense and Sensibility contrasted with the arm's length coverage it gave his Golden Bear for The Wedding Banquet, a sympathetic comedy about a gay Taiwanese man and his disapproving parents. It was never released on the mainland, where homosexuality remains a taboo. State media that did report the 1993 award identified Lee as Taiwanese, not Chinese, and reserved their accolades for mainland director Xie Fei, a co-winner of the Golden Bear that year for his The Woman From The Lake Of Scattered Souls.

Yan Hao of China won the runner-up Silver Bear Award for best director with The Sun Has Eyes. Xinhua was careful to note other China connections at the Berlin festival, saying the 11 international jurors included Chinese-American actress Joan Chen, who grew up in Shanghai, and Hong Kong director Ann Hui.

Ethiopian street trader gives birth to sextuplets

ADDIS ABABA (R) — A 35-year-old Ethiopian street trader gave birth to sextuplets Monday at a hospital in Addis Ababa but one of the babies died shortly after birth, officials said. The officials at the Black Lion Hospital in the Ethiopian capital said the remaining five weighed between 1.05 kilograms (2.31 lbs) and 800 grammes (1.76 lbs) and were in good condition.

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